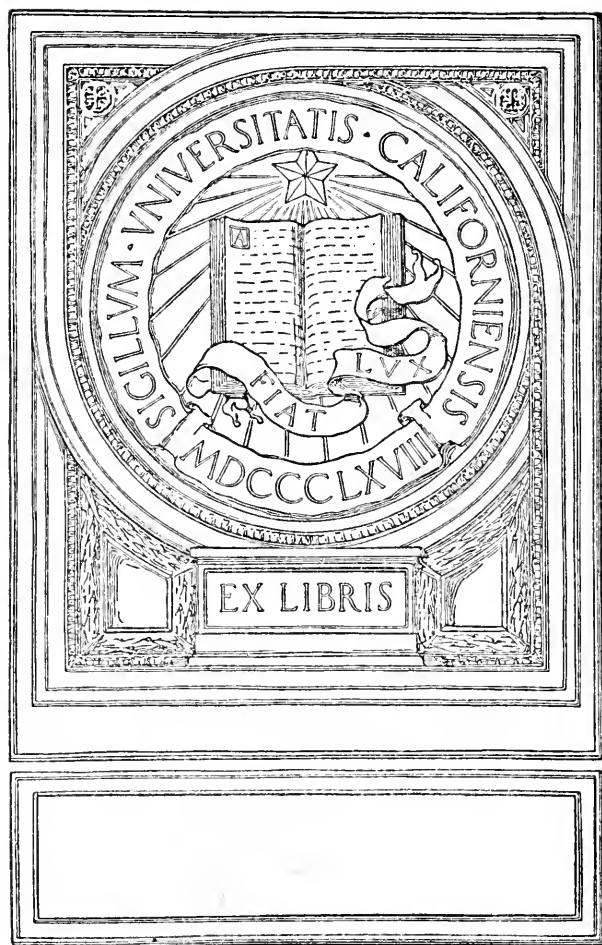


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ABELARD  
AND  
HELOISE  
HELENE  
GINGOLD







# Abelard and Heloise

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR.*

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THE CHILLINGFIELD CHRONICLES.

A CYCLE OF VERSE.

FLOWERS OF THE FIELD.

DENYSE.

HALF-A-DOZEN TRANSGRESSIONS.

SEVEN STORIES.

ETC., ETC.



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*Miss E. L. L.*



# Abelard and Heloise

A Tragedy in Five Acts

By

Hélène Gingold

//



THE  
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1906

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**Dedicated**  
TO  
HIS MAJESTY  
KING GEORGE  
OF THE  
HELLENES

M24578

Dear Mr H. Ginzelt

I had the pleasure  
to receive your letter  
the other day and thank  
you very much as well  
as for your intention  
to dedicate to me your  
play, which I am much  
pleased to accept.

Very sincerely yours



Adam Tennyson 06

## PREFATORY

MUSING one day in Père la Chaise, my wandering footsteps unconsciously strayed by the resting-place of Abelard and Heloise. There, in that hallowed spot, rendered beautiful by its eloquence in stone, Death has lost much of his aspect of sorrow and of darkness. There, where all is hushed in solemn silence, broken only by the music of the summer birds' voices, repose the ashes of some of the world's greatest and fairest lights; and, though centuries have passed, surely none were more famous and beautiful than the learned Abelard and the lovely Heloise.

Out in the busy life beyond the confines of this God's Acre, kings and kingdoms rise and fall, men and women struggle through their brief rôles and pass away unnoticed from the ranks of life; but the mutability of existence has no power here, for all remains unchanged through every vicissitude. It is governed by a tranquillity so profound, that even the thrush's gay song of Spring seems to have caught the infection of peace, and chants a gentler and a sadder note.

Dreaming over that past in which Abelard and Heloise were the principal figures, imagination conjured up to me their sufferings and their affliction, and, above all, their great love, which is itself synonymous with sorrow. Christ was "a Man of many sorrows," inasmuch as He loved mightily. "Love," Swedenborg says, "is the life of man." With all his renown as a scholar, the name of Abelard is handed down to posterity as a famous lover ; and Heloise, fair and learned above all women, is celebrated because of her passion.

As history relates it, the story of the pair strikes a fuller, deeper, and more tragic note than that of Romeo and Juliet. The latter were but boy and girl : the former a man and woman of ambitions and striking personality.

I am conscious that many abler hands than mine could have limned the lovers in a far nobler fashion, but I also know that, with all its varied errors and imperfections, none could have felt a more whole-hearted enthusiasm for this work than I.

HÉLÈNE GINGOLD.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ABELARD, *Professor of Logic, Canon of Notre Dame, and Doyen of a Newer School of Thought.*

FULBERT, *Archbishop of Paris, guardian and uncle of Heloise.*

PHILINTUS, *Friend, student, and admirer of Abelard.*

BISHOP ANSELM (*afterwards Archbishop of Paris*), *Professor of antiquated Tenets and Schools.*

ALBERIC, } *Professors and satellites of Anselm ; opposed to the ad-*  
 LOTULF, } *vanced views of Abelard.*

PRINCE AMADEUS, *betrothed to Heloise.*

FRIAR BONHOMME, *a priest.*

KING OF FRANCE.

HELOISE, *an orphan, ward and niece of Fulbert.*

AGATON, *her waiting-woman.*

MYRTILA, *a friend.*

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Citizens ; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Students.

Attendants, Priests, Citizens, Students, Musicians, a Singer, Nuns,  
 Sisters, Courtiers, and Pages.

|              |       |               |
|--------------|-------|---------------|
| <i>Epoch</i> | . . . | 12th Century. |
| <i>Place</i> | . . . | Paris.        |





# Act I



# Abelard and Heloise

## ACT I

### SCENE I

*Evening. A street in Paris. ARCHBISHOP FULBERT'S house, an imposing building, stands at the corner of the street. Other smaller dwellings adjoin: these are gaily decorated with coloured lanterns, flags, and bunting.*

*(Enter THREE CITIZENS.)*

*First Cit.* By'r Lady! it seems as though  
All Paris hath run mad to-day.

*Second Cit.* Is it not her usual state?

*First Cit.* Ay. That be true enow, but, friend,  
She does not always symbols hang  
Out o' window her mania to proclaim,  
For ev'ry stranger eye to ridicule.  
Prythee, what mean these flags and lamps?

*Third Cit.* Hast not heard the news?

*First Cit.* What news ?

*Second Cit.* Where hast been  
That thou know'st not the learned Abelard  
Hath this day outmatched professors all  
From the globe's four quarters hailing  
To compete with him in logic ?

*First Cit.* Tell me then of Abelard, for I  
But little know of Paris news,  
Seeing but an hour since I came  
From Marseilles ancient port. That Abelard  
Is learned, I have heard ; but 'tis no reason  
Why this potent city should be deck'd  
As though a conquering hero it acclaimed.

*Second Cit.* Conquering ! He is more than  
conqueror.

The warrior's path is that of ruin and death,  
While Abelard's is one of life and hope,  
For he the fruit of knowledge ripe hath pluck'd,  
And offers it to thee and me to eat.

*Third Cit.* Learning sits upon his brow  
As lightly and becomingly as rosy wreaths  
On beauty's forehead borne.

*Second Cit.* Paris has occasion to be proud  
to-day ;  
Not ev'ry land doth mother such a son.  
Faith ! 'twas rare to see the learned fight  
Amongst the sons of wisdom. First came  
England's hope, with long and heavy face,  
As tho' much learning him had robbed of grace.

His bones were bigger than his wit ; for he  
In sound did much excel, but not in sense.  
Then the German, hairy as an ape,  
Rose heavy to his feet. If he wisdom spake,  
'Twas so disguised, that none did it recognise.  
Then sprang a hot Italian in the breach,  
And volley'd an artillery of sound  
Like unto Vesuvius in eruption—  
All fume and fury. The Greek philosopher  
Was eloquent indeed. Alas ! his words  
Pythagoras had said a thousand years ago.  
After these came Abelard, and like a star  
Of unmatched splendour 'midst a galaxy  
Of earthly lamps was he. His eloquence,  
All like a tide, did bear away  
His audience in its flowing course.  
He taught, without appearing that he taught,  
How fair'st life did dwell in highest thought.

*First Cit.*                      Come, let's to a tavern !  
'Tis meet we drink to such a health  
As Abelard's !

[*Exeunt* CITIZENS.]

(*Enter* ANSELM, ALBERIC, and LOTULF.)

*Anselm (with bitterness, pointing to the lanterns,  
flags, and bunting).* Look upon these trap-  
pings !

Are they not enow to make a man  
Rave against these empty fools that raise

New worships in the place of ancient gods ?  
The Idol of to-day doth e'er supplant  
The God of yesterday : and to-morrow yet  
Will see the sun of this one set.

Senseless gew-gaws ! Out on them say I !  
Paris in old age hath childish grown,  
Thus to deck herself in folly's rags.

*Lotulf (wrathfully).* And for what, forsooth !

*Anselm.* Since Abelard hath taken  
To conjuring with his tongue.

*Alberic.* 'Tis truly said, most wise Anselm,  
No better than a mountebank is he ;  
He conjures with his words, t'other  
With his hand-trickery.

*Lotulf.* The praise of fools has turn'd his brain  
And he is drunk with adulation.  
They call him learned ! History ne'er disclosed  
A learned man who fell far short o' fifty,  
So how can Abelard at thirty-eight be wise ?  
Here am I—the youngest of us all—  
Full forty-nine come Martinmas,  
And but late have gain'd a name.

*Alberic.* Abelard hath a biting tongue. If I  
dar'd,  
I'd tell thee, noble Anselm, what he said.

*Anselm (with affected indifference).* What said  
he ?

*Alberic.* When thou did'st controvert his  
heresies,

I heard him utter, with a light, bold laugh,  
Like some gallant, unlike a sober scholar,  
—And I hate him more for his spirit gay—  
“Methinks that Anselm is the more admired  
For wrinkl’d age than wit acquired.”

*Anselm.* What he now learns I’ve long forgot.

*Lotulf.* At our rules and doctrines he doth  
mock,

And we, the props and pillars of the schools,  
He dubs as trees of knowledge—barren of fruit.  
He calls us bigots, slaves to rust,  
Whose eyes are blind with ancient dust.

*Anselm.* His tongue outstrips a racer’s legs ;  
Let him look to it. His present high estate  
Will help make his fall more great.

*Alberic.* The stars will sooner drop,  
Than this misplaced idol of the hour.

*Anselm (warningly).* Wait !  
Evil thoughts to deeds are quickly hatch’d,  
And mischief unto fire spreads ; whilst worth—  
Like timid snail doth keep within her doors.  
(*Significantly*) When worldly idols fall and  
break,

The world doth haste to stamp upon the pieces.

*Alberic (bitterly).* Who can trap a man that  
has no vice,  
Who’s cold and hard in woman’s company,  
Who loves not wine nor sottish fellowship,  
And books prefers to feasting ?

*Lotulf.* A miracle alone can hurl him down,  
And such are never wrought when most  
desired.

*Alberic.* When I do think upon his crowd'd  
lectures—

The very air being faint with scholars' breaths  
Who come from every part—my hands  
Do itch to strike the Canon Abelard.

*Lotulf (whispering to ANSELM).* Why not bid  
The hired assassin do his work ?  
Better men than he have gone that way.

*Anselm.* Tush ! fool !  
No punishment 'tis for men like Abelard  
To die a speedy death. Let him live  
I say, but live in hell's own torments !

*Lotulf (sarcastically).* My lord, thou art a  
preacher justly famed,  
Whose pray'rs have, doubtless, weight in  
heav'n ;

Mayhap, if thou dost now invoke all hell,  
Its sovereign will, with amity, respond !

*Anselm.* Love is often quench'd by fate,  
But nothing can extinguish hate :  
Love doth come, and flies away,  
But hatred ever comes to stay !

(*Enter THREE MUSICIANS with lutes. They  
station themselves beneath one of the windows  
of ARCHBISHOP FULBERT'S house.*)



*Lotulf.* What new madness is this ?

*Anselm.* There's naught new in madness.

*Alberic.* What want these fellows ?

*Lotulf.* It looks as though they want'd  
To make music.

*Anselm.* On the old theme, belike—  
In Abelard's honour. Curse Abelard !  
His very name doth rouse my bile.

*(Goes to MUSICIANS and addresses them.)*

Knaves, tell me,  
To whom would you address your songs ?

*First Musician.* To the Lady Heloise, an' it  
please you, lord.

*Anselm.* Is it she whom people call  
The beautiful and wise ?

*First Musician.* The same, my lord.

*Anselm (sneeringly).* The lion roars his love  
upon the plains,  
The jackass brays his passion to his dear,  
The bear doth growl his fond affections' pains,  
The crocodile lets fall a loving tear.  
Man alone with nature discontent,  
Flies to art to give his feelings vent.

*Lotulf.* There, fellows ! Begin !  
And heav'n grant ye a quick labour  
So we may have speedy delivery.

*First Musician (to his companions).* What  
shall we sing ?

*Second Musician.* A dainty song of Abelard's,  
That he has titled "Faded Garlands."

*Anselm (to LOTULF and ALBERIC, with savage emphasis).* Do ye hear them? Everything is Abelard!

The air we breathe is Abelard!  
What matters it if Fate be hard?  
We still are rich—in Abelard!  
If our fortune should be marr'd,  
No matter—there is Abelard!  
The wisest man, most perfect bard,  
Is no one else—save Abelard!

*First Musician (sings to the accompaniment of the lute):—*

## I

O fad'd garlands once so glad,  
That 'round your sweetness spread,  
I mourn to see your beauty gone,  
Your vari'd graces shed.

## 2

Sleep softly on, till vernal Spring  
Shall wake the silent earth,  
And rosy days and tender show'rs  
Shall give your seedlings birth.

## 3

When love is fad'd like the rose,  
And all its perfume shed,  
O ! would that Spring the charm possess'd  
To wake it from the dead.

*(At the finish of the song HELOISE appears at one of the casements. ANSELM, LOTULF, and ALBERIC watch her narrowly. ANSELM especially, who indulges in a gesture of triumph.)*

*Heloise (to the MUSICIANS).* A melancholy air,  
my friends, which yet  
Doth meet my present mood. Something  
In the words does haunt me.  
Pray ye, who did author it ?

*Second Musician.* 'Tis from the pen of Canon  
Abelard, lady.

*Heloise (musingly).* Abelard ! Abelard !  
I'll not forget the name. Thanks, my friends,  
Good-night, and thanks, and thanks again

*[Closes the casement and retires.]*

*Third Musician (enthusiastically).* That smile  
was worth a gold piece.

*Second Musician.* Wert a married man,  
thou'dst find  
That Beauty's smiles do feed no hungry mouths.

(AGATON comes out of the house and gives the  
MUSICIANS money.)

*Agaton.* My mistress sends you this, good  
sirs,  
In recognition of your music sweet.  
[*Re-enters house.*]

*First Musician.* My friends, it is not every-  
where  
One finds a lady kind as fair.  
[*Exeunt MUSICIANS.*]

*Anselm (exultantly).* Did ye mark fair Heloise ?

*Alberic.* Did I mark the sun, the moon, the  
stars ?

Who could help but mark her ? Nay, she  
Does on others leave her mark, e'en  
Upon this toughen'd heart of mine.

*Anselm.* The instrument of our revenge I see  
in Heloise.

Old Fulbert prouder is of his fair niece's  
learning

Than of all her charms. To him  
Will I speak of Abelard's great wisdom,

And so dilate upon his rare attainments,  
That—I know the fond old prelate well—  
No peace will he enjoy till Heloise  
By Abelard is school'd.

*Alberic.* In vain ye set a woman's trap for  
Abelard ;  
Eyes and hearts have wept and throb'd for him  
in vain.

By'r Lady, he's the coldest man in France.

*Anselm.* So may we all be, until we meet—  
A Heloise !

*Lotulf.* She is betrothed to Prince Amadeus.

*Anselm.* The better for our purpose. For he,  
'Tis said, doth love her dearer than his soul.  
From this small spark by me ignited  
A mighty flame shall burst.

*Alberic.* Most excellent cunning ! I see the  
drift of 't.

*Anselm.* The drift will prove an avalanche  
to Abelard.

I know those icy scholars ; they are flames  
When love at last attacks them. Unconcealed  
wrath

Is the poniard of dull fools : did not Judas  
With the semblance of true love, commit  
The deadliest act of treachery ?

But come ! I would mature my plan,  
To set my gin and snare my man.

[*Exeunt* ANSELM, ALBERIC, and LOTULF.]

(*Enter ABELARD and PHILINTUS running.*)

*Abelard.* Are we safe now ?  
By my faith ! the people are exceeding kind ;  
But such applause and zeal would sure entail  
A new cloak every time we met.

(*ABELARD laughingly looks at his cloak, which  
has been torn in the frantic enthusiasm of  
the crowd for their favourite scholar.*)

Ambition is ne'er content until she lies  
Gasping and half-stifled by the crowd's caresses ;  
Then all ungrateful cries, as I do now,  
" What, after all, are these whose praise  
I so eagerly and long have laboured for ? "  
Why, Philintus, there's not one among the  
mob

Who fathers a thought beyond a tavern !  
But tell me, are we safe ?

*Philintus.* For awhile  
We have escaped thy friendly persecutors ;  
But they'll be here anon, I warrant.  
I'faith, that was a pretty maid who came  
Foremost in the crowd to kiss thee.

*Abelard.* I did not mark her, neither did I wish  
Her forward kisses.

*Philintus.* I would have had them willingly.

*Abelard.* Would that thou could'st be  
My proxy in these matters !

*Philintus.* 'Tis passing strange that thou dost  
write

Such tender verse on love and beauty  
And yet hath ne'er a mistress.

*Abelard (with enthusiasm).* Oh ! I have a mis-  
tress, but she lives in dreams ;  
At night she comes when all the earth is  
still,

And dewy freshness fills the moonlit air  
With dim and mystic imagery.  
When the wandering breezes sigh, I learn  
The language of another world than ours ;  
Then it is my mistress comes to me.

She is Goddess of the air, and Liberty  
Hath father'd her. Her voice doth thrill my  
soul,

And hand in hand we speed thro' space,  
Her loveliness outshining all the stars,  
Who pale with envy at the sight of her,  
Unto those realms of fancy where we fly.  
We leave behind the tyranny of power ;  
The weakness and the wickedness of kings,  
States corrupt, the sensual sloth of men  
Who fear to rise against the law of servitude,  
Because, forsooth, their sires suffer'd it. There,  
temporal

Laws no power have to mar the progress of such  
thought,

Nor turn the minds and frames of men

To be mere base machinery for the State's advantage,

And not the people's welfare !

*Philintus.* And her name ?

*Abelard.* Her name is Freedom !

*Philintus.* Give me a live woman, say I,  
And the devil take the phantoms  
Who destroy men's rest.

*(Noise without of a clamouring crowd in the distance.)*

Hear'st thou the noisy tongue of Fame ?

*Abelard (wearily).* Too well ;

My heart misgives me. I am overwrought  
To-night.

*Philintus.* What ails thee ?

*Abelard (with a shiver).* Ugh ! Were I a gude  
wife old

I would now tell thee that I stood  
Upon a spot where evil bod'd me.

*Philintus.* A bumper of rich Burgundy  
Will drive these student fits away.

I warn'd thee how it would be when  
Thy books, 'fore all things, took precedence.

*Abelard.* A warning's like the plague,  
We only feel it when we catch it !

*(Hubbub of the crowd coming nearer and nearer.)*



*Abelard.*      The hunters are upon us,  
Where shall we escape ?

(*Enter FULBERT and ANSELM.*)

*Anselm.*    Abelard's the finest scholar of them  
all !

(*Sees ABELARD.*)

Why, as I live, there stands the substance  
Of my commendation ! There's fate in some  
encounters !

(*To ABELARD*) Graciously met ! Two such learned  
men

Must know each other. This, Archbishop Ful-  
bert,

Is he of whom I've spoken, brilliant Abelard.

*Fulbert.*    Your fame has long preced'd  
The graces of your person, Canon Abelard.  
I hear the voice of Paris echoing thy praise,  
Like true echo, a thousand times again.

(*Clamour of crowd coming nearer.*)

*Abelard.*                      My lord,  
I am beholden to your graciousness  
For your kindly words. But, truth to tell,  
I am somewhat weary, and fain would fly

From the crowd's embracement. As you came  
Upon us, my friend and I were planning  
An escape.

*Anselm.* There's fate, I know, there's fate in  
this ;

For the reverend Fulbert is alike renown'd  
For hospitality and for virtue.

Therefore, methinks, I read him right  
When I do say he fain would offer you  
The shelter of his friendly roof until  
The crowd is past.

*Fulbert.* Nay, good friend, surely this is wel-  
come scant

To offer this great scholar. Not alone  
Until the crowd is past, but longer far  
Do I entreat his goodly company.

Accept an old man's welcome, Abelard ;  
It lieth more at heart than voluble expression.

*Anselm (aside).* Men contrive, but chance  
determines all !

(FULBERT goes to the house door, and fumbles  
at the key in the door.)

*Fulbert.* Hands may tremble when we're old,  
But our hearts beat steadier for that.

(Opens the door.)

Enter, great scholar,  
And welcome from to-night be you for ever.

*(All enter the house but PHILINTUS, who stands in the street watching with a whimsical expression the coming rush and roar of the crowd. Enter CITIZENS and STUDENTS shouting and clamouring.)*

*First Cit.* Whither hath Abelard gone ?

*Second Cit.* I saw him pass this way. *(Points in one direction.)*

*Third Cit.* I saw him pass that way. *(Points in another direction.)*

*Second Cit.* Dog, you lie !

*Third Cit.* What ! To my face !

*(They fight. The crowd interferes, and a mêlée ensues.)*

*Philintus.* Fists fight ; throats shout ; tongues wag ;

Ye hunt the great, as ye would the stag !

*[Exit into FULBERT'S house.]*

## SCENE 2

*A room in FULBERT'S house.*

*(HELOISE and MYRTILA seated together. HELOISE is abstractedly turning over the leaves of a rich missal. MYRTILA is diligently sewing at an altar cloth.)*

*Myrtila.* Here dost thou in meditation sit,  
my Heloise,

As though a sepulchre had ope'd to enfold thee  
In lieu the arms of such a courtly gallant  
As Prince Amadeus. Full many a maid  
Would give her eyes for such a lover.

*Heloise.* I would give my eyes  
If I could not see him.

*Myrtila.* But thy uncle loves and favours him.

*Heloise.* If Heloise were her uncle, and her  
uncle Heloise,

Then this match would rejoice her.

*Myrtila.* Thou dost not surely hate him ?

*Heloise.* Hate ! Nay, I hate him not ;  
But then I do not love him.

*Myrtila* (*biting off a thread and shaking  
her head wisely*). One need not deeply  
love to wisely wed.

*Heloise.* What, Mignon ! dar'st prate of wed-  
ding lacking love,

When it alone should make one wed ?

*Myrtila* (*sewing with assumed assiduity, wisely  
as before*). Many men and women think  
they love, then wed,

And buy dear pleasure for a month  
At the price of life's discomfort.

*Heloise.* Those rules and methods sway thee  
In which thy gentle mother train'd thee.  
Alas ! I never knew such hallow'd love,  
For, when I came, my mother died ;  
Then kindly Fulbert foster'd me.

He trained me like a darling son ;  
For thou did'st sew when I read Greek,  
And thou did'st play when I was set  
To hold my own 'midst Latin scholars.  
When thou did'st gossip with fair friends,  
Sage men were my companions ;  
And in their weighty converse I forgot  
The levity of youth.

*Myrtila.* Leave wisdom to the aged !  
Why should'st thou so sweet and fair  
Be old before thy time ? I pray thee  
Wed the Prince who loves thee so.  
'Twill make thy Uncle Fulbert glad,  
And fill thy friend with proudest joy.

*Heloise.* I love not Amadeus. But affection  
strong  
Binds me to my kinsman Fulbert.

*Myrtila.* If thou lov'st no other man,  
Why not wed the Prince ? He's young,  
He's handsome, opulent, and noble.

*Heloise.* Come, sit beside, and I will tell thee.

(MYRTILA takes a stool and sits at the feet of  
HELOISE.)

*Heloise.* I have dream'd of a vision lov'r,  
Which makes me shun those temporal.  
He stands alone, and soars above the earth  
With high-erect'd thoughts beyond his time.  
His lofty truths, like heaven's thunder,

Seem to shake the world, and wake  
The drowsy sluggard from his idle rest  
To nobler aims. No line of ancestry he claims,  
For, like a god, he doth create,  
And not by chance of birth inherit.  
Yea ! I have dreamed of him, Myrtilla,  
Until my lips have called on him to come,  
And with a kiss he hath unseal'd my soul,  
Which, flutt'ring like a bird set free,  
Hath gone to him for ever.

*Myrtilla.* Let not a dream  
With false and flitting images  
Cloud thy life with melancholy.  
I beseech thee—cast dreams to shadowland  
From whence they came, and wed the Prince.

*Heloise.* I fain would please my good old  
guardian  
E'en against my own desires.

*Myrtilla.* I'll take thy half-consent, and make  
it whole.  
When a woman says "Mayhap," she meaneth  
"Aye."

Princess Heloise ! how fine it sounds !  
Here comes the Prince !

[*Exit.*

(*Enter* PRINCE AMADEUS.)

*Amadeus.* Would that I knew the pensive  
cloak of thought

That now enwraps thee was of a colour  
Most harmonious to my wish ?

*Heloise.* After all that I have said against  
it,

Think you I still can bring you happiness ?

*Amadeus (passionately).* Oh, Heloise ! I dream  
of thee as shipwreck'd mariners  
Do think upon a far-off golden shore !  
Thou art my sole idea of happiness.  
My highest hopes—ambitions—joys—  
Do bear one corporeal form in thee.  
There were none fair, till thou did'st come ;  
None were gracious, till thou did'st smile ;  
There was no music, till thy voice  
Creat'd by its harmony another world for me.  
Through sickness, sorrow, and misfortune,  
Through wrinkl'd age, untoward circumstance,  
Through every mood—so it be thine—  
Will I cherish thee with constancy.  
Nay, so deep my love will be,  
Response at last must come from thee.

*Heloise (giving her hand to AMADEUS).* Not so  
hard of soul am I, my Prince,  
That I unmov'd can listen to your words.  
Here is my hand. My heart, mayhap,  
Will follow it in time. A woman's nature  
Is a citadel that surrenders oft to kindness.

*Amadeus.* For so much graciousness,  
Loving thee as I do, I thank thee.

*(Tumult without of the crowd, who shout "Long live Abelard!" "Long live Abelard!")*

*Heloise.* Abelard! Abelard! Who is Abelard?

To-night, when your musicians play'd,  
They told me that the verse and melody  
Both were writ by one Abelard!

*Amadeus.* Abelard hath the greatest name  
For learning in all France. Hast never heard  
Of him before?

*Heloise.* You forget that I but lately come  
From Rome. In convents, learned living men  
Give place to the wiser dead.

Is Abelard an old and sour'd man?  
'Tis strange that wisdom's fairest gifts  
Do fall upon the plainest laps!

*Amadeus.* Women call him handsome.  
But what do women know of looks?  
They'll measure beauty by the yard,  
And if a man is longer than a pole  
"He's finely built," and if he's squat  
And fat, they'll have it he is strong;  
A man need only have a face,  
For women to accord him grace.

*(Enter FULBERT, followed by ABELARD, ANSELM,  
and PHILINTUS. At the sight of ABELARD,  
HELOISE becomes transfixed, then starts,  
and cries.)*



*Heloise.* My dream lover !

*Fulbert (garrulously).* This is my niece, most  
learned Abelard ;

Our sudden coming in hath startl'd her.

All the treasures of my house I have shown  
you

Save this, but for the last reserved

The greatest and the best.

*Abelard (aside to PHILINTUS).* Where is my  
earthly logic now

Before this piece of heavenly work divine ?

She seems to throw a stream of light around,

Which makes us all but heavy clay com-  
par'd.

*(Aloud to HELOISE).* Meseems

That I have look'd upon your face ere  
now,

But not in life. In some great picture

Limm'd by master hand, when his art

Has sought a model fit in Paradise !

*Fulbert (complacently).* Abelard hath most  
delicate civility.

Did ye hear the pretty compliment he made ?

Lord ! that I my manners should forget

In praising of another ! Monsignor Abelard !

Be pleased to know Prince Amadeus, betrothed

To Heloise. Methinks, it is but right

That learning great and high nobility

Should go hand-in-hand in amity.

(ABELARD *and* AMADEUS *shake hands*: ABELARD *with frank kindness of manner*, AMADEUS *with ill-concealed annoyance*.)

*Fulbert.* Nor must I neglect Messire Philintus,

The loyal friend of Canon Abelard.

*Heloise.* You are welcome, sir.

*Anselm (aside, watching ABELARD, who regards HELOISE with wonder and admiration).*

The victory is ours !

The iceberg melts already !

*Fulbert.* Silence seals thy lips to Abelard, sweet niece.

Speak to him ; be not afraid, altho'

He is the noblest son of France.

*Heloise (to ABELARD, falteringly).* I bid you welcome, Monseigneur,

Not in words alone, but with my heart,

For it seems as if I too had seen

Your face and heard your voice before—in dreams.

*Anselm (aside).* Why need Lucifer set traps,  
When mortals aye pursue his ways without ?

*Amadeus (fumingly to FULBERT).* Heloise appears

Much taken with this scholar.

I like it not.

*Fulbert (warningly).* Prince ! Prince !  
Harbour not the serpent Jealousy. Her venom

Paints all actions black, and would  
Befoul an angel's deeds with poison.

*Amadeus.* Too little jealousy  
Fares as ill as too much !

*Anselm (who has been listening, with a covert smile).* I entreat your pardon,  
But by chance I overheard the subject  
Of your discourse. Prince, I swear to you  
That Abelard to love is inaccessible :  
He hates all womankind.

*(Aside)* To hate all women doth keep no  
man  
From loving one !

*Fulbert (eagerly to ANSELM).* Think'st thou,  
my friend,  
That Abelard would teach my Heloise ?  
There's much of Greek and Latin that  
I still would have her learn. Thou dost not  
answer.

*Anselm.* 'Tis because I think for thee ;  
Abelard's time is greatly taken up.

*(Aside)* I know the world. Men seek the more  
To reach the thing that is withheld.

*Fulbert.* Shall I speak to him ?  
If I ask, mayhap I'll court refusal.

*Anselm.* If he refuse thee, court him till he  
yields.

*Fulbert.* I thank thee, Anselm, for thy counsel ;  
'Twas a goodly thought from a pious man.

(Goes to ABELARD, who is conversing with  
HELOISE.)

Monsieur Abelard !

I have one fond desire, which, if you  
Accord, will make me glad indeed.

*Abelard.* Noble Fulbert, your request  
Is granted ere 'tis utter'd.

*Philintus.* Is not that rashly spoken ?

*Fulbert.* Learned Abelard, I fain  
Would have my niece instruct'd by you.  
Wil't teach her ?

*Abelard (hesitatingly).* I teach but men.  
(*Aside*) I must fight with this request.  
Already she has taught me that  
My heart is far too apt a pupil  
In the school of love !

*Anselm (tentatively).* Methought it would  
be so !

Abelard doth think that womenkind  
Are wayward, pliable, and easy ; with no soul  
And no stability to learn as men have.  
Yet Socrates did say that females are  
A sex no way inferior to ours  
Save in strength corporal.

*Abelard.* Think me not so churlish ;  
I have no thought of womenkind but  
Would grace the heart of any man.

*Heloise.* Refuse not then, I pray,  
To count me amongst the humblest  
Of your happy scholars.

*Abelard (aside).* Vain to fly, when passion's  
                  snares  
Have seized upon us unawares.

*Fulbert.* Can you refuse the darling wish  
Of an old man's heart ?

*Abelard.*               The lips of revered age  
Scarce ever ask in vain.

*Amadeus (interposing with some heat).* To  
                  what doth all this learning tend,  
And what needs Heloise with more of 't ?

*Philintus (aside to ABELARD).* There's some-  
                  thing wrong in all this,  
And, womanlike, I can no reason give,  
But that I like it not for thee, my Abelard.  
Forego this scholar, she's too fair. Say "Nay,"  
And make an end on 't.

*Abelard (aside).* I'm torn between ye all.  
How can I harsh refuse a simple boon  
That kind old man and his fair niece  
Have ask'd of me ?

*Amadeus (angrily).* Heloise shall learn no  
                  more.  
I will not brook it.

*Heloise.*               Prince !  
It is not your right, as yet,  
To sway or rule my will.

*Anselm (gleefully, aside).* A quarrel already !  
And Abelard the subject ! What news  
For Lotulf and for Alberic.  
Love and hate are plants that grow  
Beyond our power, ere we know.

*(Hubbub of crowd outside the house shouting, "Long live Abelard, the elegant scholar !" A woman's voice is heard above the rest, screaming, "Love to the handsome Abelard !" which is followed by laughter and cheers from the mob.)*

*Amadeus (with suppressed fury, aside).* Let  
me but hear one word  
Save that used in common courtesy,  
And I will slay this half-fledg'd priest.

*Fulbert (rubbing his hands with delight, goes to the casement and opens it wide ; the cries of the crowd are vociferous).* This is balsam  
to my mind,  
To feel that men do justly value wisdom.

*Philintus (to ABELARD).* Thou should'st speak  
to them,  
For thou alone canst calm the storm  
Which thou hast call'd to life.

*(Crowd without, "Long live great Abelard !"*  
*"Abelard !" "Abelard !" FULBERT*

*approaches ABELARD and leads him to the casement, wherefrom his appearance is hailed with enthusiasm.)*

*Abelard (to the crowd).* Friends ! for this, your  
gracious welcome,  
I would in truth a niggard be  
To close my thanks within my breast  
As misers do their gold. Yet, I would plead  
That I am weary with the work  
Of many days and nights unslept : and thus  
Reminding ye there's no success without its  
hitch,  
Fain would I seek repose.

*A Voice in the crowd.* A mob is plaguey ; like  
the plague,  
'Twill stick until some antidote  
Disperses it. We want no windy speech,  
But something tunefully extemporised.

*(The crowd shouts " Hurrah ! " " Hurrah ! " and the speaker's suggestion is received with every demonstration of approval.)*

*Philintus.* Give them a verse or two  
On knowledge.

*Abelard.* 'Tis a subject  
Hard to assail and difficult to dismiss.

*Amadeus* (*contemptuously*). Then speak of  
wars  
And mighty deeds of prowess.

*Abelard.* What ! I ?  
Who ne'er slew man yet  
By word o' mouth or courtly point of sword !

*Fulbert.* A few, but chosen, words  
On wisdom will suffice.

*Abelard.* A cataract, my lord,  
Will not be dammed by hazel wood ;  
A noble theme requires a noble treatment,  
Or else 'tis dammed by lukewarm handling.

*Anselm* (*with hypocritical unction*). Speak of  
the Universal Mother !

*Abelard.* The Earth ?

*Anselm.* Nay. The Church.

*Abelard* (*aside*). 'Tis all the same ;  
Both have a maw insatiable.

*Heloise.* Let your theme be  
That which delights the heart of every man—  
Love, and his Native Land.

(ABELARD, *inspired by HELOISE, stands before  
the open casement and declaims the following ;  
and although his tones sometimes rise to a  
pitch of enthusiasm, the manner of his re-  
cital shows that it is extempore.*)



## I

My Native Land, where Nature greets the eye  
With mount and valley emerald green and fair ;  
Where Beauty's charms live not to fade and die,  
But reign supreme in lasting triumph there.

## 2

Bless'd clime ! far greater in thy aspect mild  
Than all the warlike cities of the earth,  
Thou teachest mankind as a simple child,  
The calm, but great nobility of worth.

## 3

The alien hand shall never blight that land  
Which Freedom claims entirely as her own ;  
There Love and Gladness wander hand in hand,  
There sway of sceptr'd tyrant is unknown.

## 4

Farewell awhile ! Now Duty bids me hence,  
But aye this thought is cherish'd in my breast ;  
That for my long, long labour's recompense,  
My dust within my native earth shall rest !

*(The crowds shout and hurrah, and HELOISE  
impulsively darts forward and kisses*

ABELARD'S *hand*. PRINCE AMADEUS, *with a gesture of anger, half-draws his sword and would rush at ABELARD, but is restrained by ANSELM, who cautiously withholds him.*)

*Anselm* (meaningly). Patience, patience,  
Prince !

There is a time for everything,  
And your time is—not yet !

## Act II



## ACT II

### SCENE I

*Hall in ANSELM'S house (window overlooking garden).*

*(ANSELM, LOTULF, and ALBERIC meeting.)*

*Anselm.* Well met, good friends !  
There's excellent sport afoot, e'en for us  
Who do not hunting go.

*Lotulf.* Say'st thou  
That the lion is already caught ?

*Anselm.* I do say it.

*Alberic.* But 'tis so quickly done—  
It cannot be of a surety.

*Anselm.* Who ever lov'd with passion's fire  
That lov'd not at first sight ? I tell thee  
That he is so bound with love, his very silence  
Speaks it. Oh ! Abelard is caught.

*Alberic.* How canst thou believe a sign ?  
Who never loved, can never tell  
The emblems of true passion.

*Anselm.* How dost thou know I never lov'd ?  
Think not because chill age imparts  
Dullness to eye and speech, time was not  
When youth did warm my blood  
With lover's ardour.

*Lotulf.* Silence is but an ashen proof  
Of a burning fire.

*Anselm (contemptuously).* There are other  
tokens.

He's quitted Aristotle, and doth sweetly talk  
On Ovid's art of Love. Sage Socrates  
Is banished for light Apollo. Nor is this all.  
Yon little casement looks into old Fulbert's  
garden ;

There, unseen, I watch the master and his pupil,  
The famous Abelard and the fair Heloise.  
I see his frame oft shake in sighs  
As though Vesuvius were in labour  
And troubl'd to be delivered of its lava.

*Lotulf.* Let us too watch and listen.  
Old Fulbert's garden is so begirt  
With shrubs and trees and flowered banks,  
'Twould no labour be to hide and hearken  
To their discourse. If it be learned,  
We can leave them ; be it amorous,  
Straightway let us to old Fulbert.

*Alberic.* Like the Archangel Gabriel. And  
tell him  
Drive this Adam from his Eve and Eden.

Then Amadeus  
Will rise in arms against the wolf,  
Who in lamb-like guise did come  
To steal away his dear !

*Anselm.* Come then and watch  
This fire I have light'd ; this love  
Shall bring us our revenge.

## SCENE 2

*A part of ARCHBISHOP FULBERT'S garden, houses on one side. At the bottom flows a stream of the Seine, on whose silvery breast is scattered water-lilies. The fruit blossoms deck the trees in rich profusion, and the very air seems redolent with the breath of early summer. ABELARD, holding a book, is seated on a rustic bench, and HELOISE, a few paces off, also has a volume in her hands. Their attitudes are those of master and pupil. During the opening lines FULBERT, ANSELM, LOTULF, and ALBERIC come out of the house and hide behind the trees.*

*Abelard (as though reading from his volume).*  
My heart was like the deep unfathom'd sea  
Which thine eyes alone have sounded.

*Heloise (also as though reading).* My love was  
pent up like a pearl

Within a shell which none could ope.  
But lo ! the music of thy voice  
Did cause it to unclose.

*Abelard.* Is that what Catullus says ?  
Methinks that you have read it wrongly.

*Heloise (hastily).* Not I, master.

*Abelard (continuing).* Suns may set and rise  
again,  
But once this too brief life is o'er,  
We sleep thro' one perpetual night.

*(Closes his book, and speaks as though from  
memory.)*

Therefore love me, for I love thee,  
And short is our time for joy  
On earth here below.

*Heloise.* Is that in the book ?  
Methinks—methinks—— *(Pauses confusedly.)*

*Abelard.* What think you, gentle scholar ?

*Heloise (seating herself on the trunk of a  
fallen tree).* No matter, Monseigneur,  
my thoughts are birds ;  
They flutter to my heart and fly away again.

*Abelard (reopens his book, and repeats as though  
reading therefrom).* Sweet maid ! thy pure  
and thoughtful eyes  
Have caught the colour from the skies.  
O surely in some other land  
Than this I must have touched that hand



And heard thy golden voice repeat  
The light'st things to make them sweet.  
Were I the flow'rs by thy side,  
To die near thee would be my pride.

*Heloise.* Alas! You know the book so well,  
I cannot follow you so fast. But show me  
Where this verse is writ! My book  
Doth hold it not.

*(Goes over to ABELARD.)*

*Abelard (closing the book with vehemence).* Here,  
'tis written here, within my breast,  
Upon that book which is my heart alone.  
Now bid me hence, and quit your sight,  
And change joy's day to woe of night.

*Heloise.* Were I to bid you hence,  
I'd send myself as well. You hold  
The better part of me, and what remains  
Is but the husk and shell of Heloise.

Go from me,  
And all that's me goes with you.

*(Drawn by a mutual and irresistible impulse,  
they embrace. As this takes place, ANSELM  
stealthily leads FULBERT from the em-  
brasure of the trees. ALBERIC and LOTULF  
follow them.)*

*Fulbert (with tremulous indignation).* Oh! that  
mine eyes had borne false witness!

Oh ! that my senses had, with madness'  
hues,

Paint'd this scene 'fore my disorder'd brain,  
Taking all truth's colours, and yet been perjur'd !  
Noble Anselm, bear with me, and ye, revered  
sirs,

That I did first, with scornful disbelief,  
Deny your tale of shame. O Love ! O Trust !  
Ye are but gods of clay—and dust.

*Anselm (aside to FULBERT).* Send him hence,  
but thy dignity uphold ;  
'Tis only in affliction that characters of worth  
Can show they're finer dust than common potters'  
earth !

*Lotulf (with the object of working up FULBERT'S  
passion).* You are deeply injur'd, noble  
Fulbert ;

Therefore show no mercy. Pity would be weak-  
ness.

*Alberic (with the same object in view).* Would  
that we were younger spirits all,  
That one of us might challenge Abelard,  
And kill him for his foul deceit.

*(The lovers have hitherto been unaware of their  
intruders, enwrapped as they are by the  
communion of their first love. FULBERT,  
with stern and forbidding countenance, comes  
between them.)*

*Fulbert.* Oh ! that deceit,  
Damnable, corrupt, and vile deceit, should  
hide

Beneath such seeming virtue ! Where is chastity  
If Heloise be false ? And where is truth  
When Abelard doth lie ? How true it is  
That deadliest poisons hidden lurk  
Within the sweetest guise. O Virtue ! I have  
followed

In thy footsteps throughout life  
To find thee but a shade ! Bear with me,  
Good Anselm ; I am an old man, and a weak,  
And things now wreck my soul that ne'er  
Before had roused my spirit.

(*To ABELARD*) Get thee from my sight, false  
Abelard !

I'll never hear thy name again but I  
Will curse it. When men shall praise thy  
learning,

I'll think of it as devil's wiles, with which  
He hath invest'd thee so thou  
Should'st better work in his black service.

(*To HELOISE*) Wanton maid !  
Get thee to thy chamber ; I'll follow thee  
anon !

*Abelard.* Hold, old man !  
In all this hapless matter she is innocent.  
Mine alone the fault, if fault it be ;  
Mine the guilt, if there be guilt in love.

And if you be not like those judges false,  
Who, sway'd by pow'r, fear, or thought of gain,  
Maim and mangle laws of God and man,  
Twisting even an angel's deed to crime  
For some foul purpose damn'd—reproach thy-  
self,

Or me, or Nature, but not sweet Heloise.  
Are scholars less than men, that they  
Should fail to love earth's best creat'd things ?  
Repress it, stunt it, as ye will,  
But Nature will be nature still.

*Anselm (aside to FULBERT).* How craftily he  
speaks !

His tongue would make thee out to be  
As full of guilt and guile as he.

*Fulbert.* But there is truth in what he says,  
For I besought him teach my niece.  
(*To ABELARD*) In leaving here, wilt promise  
me

To atone in part for thy transgression ?

*Abelard (moodily).* What would you have ?

*Fulbert.* Vow to me to see no more  
This maid, who is betroth'd unto another.

*Abelard.* Bid me to see the sun no more  
Waking from his nightly sleep  
To don his mantle gold of day.  
Bid me to close mine eyes unto the stars,  
Whose tender glances pity suffering earth  
Burning with sorrow's fever.

Bid me close mine eyes to all the world  
And its so-call'd joys, but not  
To her who hath aroused my heart  
From its dull sleep. Old man ! thou know'st not  
What thou hast ask'd of me ! E'en death  
Will not close out the form of my belov'd.  
My closing eyes would still behold her  
As a dying Eastern pictures paradise ;  
And in the sleep of death that follows,  
My dream would still be—Heloise !

*Heloise.* Yesterday I dar'd not utter  
The words that must be said to-day.  
When thou wert here, an honour'd guest,  
I fear'd to say how dear I held thee,  
Lest thou should'st lightly prize  
A love that quickly came. But now,  
Since cruel circumstance hath changed her face  
And frowns on us : go with these words  
In thine ears and heart. I love thee, Abelard !  
With all my soul's most deep, most true,  
Most earnest tenderness, I love thee !

*Fulbert (seizing HELOISE roughly).* Out upon  
thee !  
Thou speak'st like a strumpet, not a maid ;  
Begone to thy chamber ! Go !

*Heloise.* God be with thee, sweet Abelard !

[*Exit.*

*Fulbert (furiously, to ABELARD).* Will you  
begone ?

*Anselm.* In all the annals of outrag'd hospitality,

None can find so black a crime as this.

I grieve to see such villainy

'Neath the surface of such learning !

*Lotulf.* Alas ! To think a man so gifted  
Should be so base !

*Alberic.* I mourn to see a man so high  
Descend so low.

*Abelard.* Snarl, ye hounds ! Voice was given  
ye

To use it as ye do. I know ye passing well.

Ye, whose tongues distil fine honey,

Gather venom in your hearts, like snakes,

And disgorge it when ye list !

I know your mock humility, your act'd lies,

Your vain hypocrisy. Ye wend your ways

In luxury and free indulgences,

Whilst from your pulpits preach to men

On Temperance. Your Church is like a palace,

The while pale Want without doth starve.

I know ye passing well ! And if the State

Be built upon such crumbling earth as ye,

Woe unto the land whose groundwork is so  
rotten,

And woe unto the king that leans on ye !

Ye censure me for loving, but 'tis not that

Which hath arous'd the malice in your breasts.

Virtue's your pretext, but your cause is spite.

Many tongues rank envy speaks :  
Winds howl around the highest peaks !

[*Exit.*

*Alberic.* A dangerous man !

*Lotulf.* A dangerous man !  
Full to bursting of vague threat'nings  
Like a rumbling thunder-cloud.

*Alberic.* Look to your niece, noble Fulbert ;  
She'll not be safe while he's about.

*Lotulf.* She'll be safe  
When she is wed.

*Anselm.* Tush ! fool ! 'Tis the captive bird  
Most longs to fly. Prithee, good Fulbert,  
Wilt tell the Prince of Canon Abelard's  
misdeed ?

*Fulbert.* No word of it, I pray ye, friends,  
An' ye do love me. Blood would come on 't,  
And all the world would hear the tale,  
And, outwardly deploring, relish the scandal.

*Anselm.* Lotulf, Alberic, ye hear what our  
good bishop says ?  
Wilt swear not to prate of this to any ?

*Lotulf.* }  
*Alberic.* } We swear !

*Fulbert.* I thank you heartily.  
I do beseech ye dine with me this day,  
For I would your counsel take  
Of my niece's marriage. I am much distraught,  
But, nathless, the cruel reason on 't

Will urge me to enforce obedience  
To my behests.

*Anselm.* Enforc'd obedience never yet  
Did teach a lover to forget.

[*Exit omnes.*]

SCENE 3

*A street. The exterior of FULBERT'S house as in  
ACT I, SCENE I.*

(*Enter ABELARD and PHILINTUS.*)

*Philintus.* Prythee, Abelard,  
Come here no more. 'Tis a spot  
Thou should'st avoid like swift contagion ;  
'Twas here thou first did'st catch love's fever.

*Abelard.* Hast thou not heard that criminals  
Are ever drawn into the spot where first  
Their hands with blood were dyed ?

*Philintus.* But thou—surely thou  
Wert never as the common herd ?

*Abelard.* Good friend !  
At one time or other in existence  
All men pay tribute  
At Love's high altar. When the sacrifice  
Comes late in life, why, then, 'tis most severe.  
Philosophy, wisdom, learning, all are targets  
At which the little mocking god  
Doth wing his most barb'd arrows.



*Philintus* (*significantly*). His darts are poison'd,  
like the Tarantella sting,  
And when they enter some men's blood  
It makes them mad indeed.

*Abelard.* He who hath found love  
Hath found he hath a soul.

*Philintus.* Wise Solomon and great David  
Must have been possess'd of many souls,  
For, by Jesu ! they had loves enow !  
Prythee, Abelard, break from these shackles fond !  
It grieves me much to see that men like Anselm,  
Alberic, and Lotulf scale scholastic heights  
Whilst thou sitt'st dreaming ! Nay, forgive me !  
My devotion is so strong,  
I cannot bear that others should usurp  
The rightful place which thou should'st grace.  
Thou art by nature great, they but Art's poor  
tools ;  
The Fates that gifted thee, made them but fools.

*Abelard.* All would I quick forego  
Had I but Heloise !

*Philintus.* Oh, this is love's delirium !

(*Enter AGATON, running.*)

*Philintus* (*barring her way*). Fair Heloise's  
woman !

Love's messenger, Love's physician,  
Come with a healing balm, a cooling mixture,  
Which takes its form in billet shape.

Whither so fast, good girl ?

*Agaton.* I am in haste, Messire, to find—  
No matter, I should not tell you—  
Let me pass, else my sweet mistress  
Will be undone.

*Philintus.* The news is sad, but 'twill not kill  
me.

By “undone” methinks you mean  
Her bodice is unlac'd. I pray you, girl,  
Be calm ; these things will happen oft.  
Now to her shoes, do they fit properly ?

*Agaton.* By “undone,” your lordship,  
I do mean that they will kill her,  
Archbishop Fulbert and the rest.  
She weeps and weeps, and they talk and talk,  
So that I fear she'll melt away  
In sorrow's fiery smelting-pot  
Which passion heats like furnace.  
Where is the Canon Abelard ?

(*PHILINTUS continues to bar AGATON'S way,  
and endeavours to prevent her from seeing  
ABELARD, who wanders to and fro in a  
reverie.*)

*Philintus.* Abelard ! Why ! Abelard is dead !  
He died of love an hour since ;  
So get thee gone, and tell them home.  
Old Fulbert will rejoice !

*Agaton.* If thou speak true, and he be dead  
indeed,  
Oh, then, I'll lay her letter on his breast ;  
So when he wakes in kinder lands than this—  
In which fond lovers are divid'd oft—  
'Twill comfort him until my lady follows.

*Philintus.* Give me the letter ;  
I'll joyfully perform your solemn wish.

*Agaton.* Nay, I will not ;  
'Twas given me to do, and I will do it.

*(PHILINTUS tries to snatch the letter from her.  
AGATON bravely defends herself. A struggle  
ensues, furious on the side of the woman,  
teasingly good-humoured on the side of the  
man. ABELARD becomes suddenly aware of  
the contention, and goes to them.)*

*Abelard.* What ! Agaton, what, thou ?

*Agaton.* God be praised that you do live !  
Live, I mean, for my dear mistress' sake.  
Here is a note she bade me give you,  
Ere Messire Philintus told me of your death.

*(Gives ABELARD a letter.)*

*Philintus.* If Abelard had dead and buried  
been  
Beneath the mighty Pyramids, on this receipt  
He would have risen from his sepulchre !

Thanks, wench, I bear the marks of thy attentions;  
Thy finger nails are like thy betters',  
Long and finely pointed.

*(Examines the scratches AGATON has given him  
in the struggle.)*

*(ABELARD tears open the missive AGATON has  
given him, and reads):—*

“ False Fortune in extremes is ever.  
She loads with fairest gifts, then heaps  
Calamities most dire upon her votaries.  
Nor hell itself hath tortures so refin'd !  
The mem'ries of dear pleasures past  
She changes to a spring of endless tears !  
Under pain of his displeasure, my uncle  
Doth command me wed the Prince.  
And this—before another week be o'er !  
From this abhorred marriage, save me, Abelard !  
In affliction, as she is in joy,  
Thy HELOISE.”

*Abelard (to AGATON).* How fares thy mistress ?

*Agaton.* But ill, an' it please you,  
For she doth naught but weep and think  
On thee, great Abelard, and the marriage  
They would force her to.

*Abelard.* Go ! take this message to her.

*Agaton.* That will I gladly.

(*Prepares to run off.*)

*Abelard.* Stay ! Stay !

Thou know'st not yet what I would say.  
Commend me to thy mistress, Lady Heloise,  
And to her private ear this message breathe,—  
That she should hie to-night with thee—  
Under plea of going to Confessional—  
Unto Notre Dame. Messire Philintus here  
Will be in waiting, and guide her to my study.  
There will I offer her the refuge  
Of a husband's name. I will contrive that  
A holy man shall marry us to-night.

*Philintus (aside).* Ah me ! to see the light of  
Abelard

Hidden 'neath a bushel. To be a genius  
And a married man are things incompatible.

*Agaton.* Now blessings on thy pathway wait ;  
Not all are good who yet are great.

[*Exit, running.*]

*Philintus (grumbling).* Woman, woman !  
O fair ! O sweet ! O “ something ” woman !  
Heav'n hath not such pow'r of doing good  
As ye all have of doing grievous ill.  
O Love ! not all the mischief done by Hate  
Can o'ertop thy work !

*Abelard.* Thou know'st not  
What it is to love !

*Philintus.* I am too wary of that same affliction ;  
I see its ill effects too well in others.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 4

*A part of the interior of Notre Dame, showing a passage, also a recess that is screened off, fitted as a study. Shelves of volumes fill the walls, but otherwise it is meagrely furnished with a few chairs, and a desk at which ABELARD is sitting, writing by the light of a lamp. Beside him is an emblem of mortality in the shape of a skull. Vespers are being sung.*

I

'Gainst earthly passions, Jesu, pray  
Deliver us by night and day !  
Unlink those fearful chains that hold  
Men to lust and thirst of gold.  
Miserere Domine !

2

When our eyes to Thee we raise  
In mute appeal or thankful praise,  
O teach us that our pray'r should be  
Devoid of base hypocrisy.  
Miserere Domine !

## 3

All worldly pleasures turn to pain,  
They fly and never come again ;  
But they who suffer here below,  
Hereafter endless joy shall know.

Miserere Domine !

## 4

'Gainst earthly passion, Jesu, pray  
Deliver us by night and day !  
Unlink those fearful chains that hold  
Men to lust and thirst of gold.

Miserere Domine !

(*The CHOIR ceases.*)

*Abelard (musingly, as his pen falls from his hand).* " 'Gainst earthly passions, . . .  
Deliver us by night and day ! " . . .  
What makes these words to dwell upon my mind ?  
Passion—we pray from passions to be free !  
But Passion is not Love, yet—where's the difference ?  
Methinks that Passion is ephemeral, gross, and  
carnal,  
An earthly flow'r grown in earth  
And fed on all that's earthly.  
But Love is Heaven's plant, and nurtur'd is  
By noble, pure, and selfless thoughts.

What is Fame unto sweet Love compar'd ?  
Love is peace ; Ambition but a struggle,  
A shadow that eludes the grasp of man  
And lures him to the grave with empty promises.  
How glittering is thy strife, O Glory !  
But thy victim's groans are drown'd  
By the shouts of thy few conquerors !

Pre-eminence once lost  
Is like the gloom of Tartarus. Ambition's narrow  
way  
Lies block'd and strewn with bloodless forms,  
Scorch'd to nothingness by calumny and in-  
justice.  
Ambition's hand will oft lead men astray ;  
'Tis Love alone that truly points the way.

*(Resumes his writing.)*

*(PHILINTUS enters, leading HELOISE, in a mantle  
and hood, toward the recess in which  
ABELARD is writing.)*

*Philintus (coldly).* Here, Madam, here is the  
room of Abelard,  
Abelard who once was great,  
But shall soon be so no more.  
Fame must fly when Love goes in th' door.

*Heloise.* You are his friend ;  
Then stay you here and listen. His renown  
Is as dear to me as ever 'twas to you.



(HELOISE enters ABELARD'S room. PHILINTUS accepts her invitation, and waits outside to hear the interview.)

*Abelard (to himself).* I cannot think. I cannot even write

Aught but "Heloise" upon these pages white.

I close mine eyes, and see her picture rare.

Delightful dream ! illusion fond and fair !

Alas ! that when I open them again,

The mocking vision leaves but mem'ry's pain !

*Heloise.* Abelard !

*Abelard (starting from his reverie).* My Heloise !

*Heloise.* Here is my refuge and my haven  
sure ;

Here in thy arms all ills I could endure.

*Abelard (embracing her).* Dear heart,

E'en our undying love must

By the Church be bless'd.

A holy friar will shortly join us,

And sanction with all pious rite our union.

*Philintus (who is listening outside, contemptuously).* Here comes her chance to weep  
and sigh,

To murmur, " Why dost thou love me—why ? "

Oh, wedd'd bliss ! what woman yet

Would miss that hap to make men fret ?

*Heloise.* Hath not love more pow'r than  
bonds

To keep our hearts united ? Why should I  
Arrest thy learning's great advancement ?  
A man of wisdom needs not wife  
To harass him with details daily,  
To weary him with trite and stale accounts—  
How Betty broke the milking-stool, or  
That Jacques' first teeth are coming hard  
With fits and fever, and a thousand facts  
Which wedd'd life is father to. O Abelard !  
Shun that iron contract men call marriage,  
Which, like a millstone round the neck of love,  
Crushes all the life therefrom !

*Abelard.* Impossible ! my love could never  
change.

*Heloise.* Others, too, have thought like thee,  
my Abelard ;

Yet marriage aye hath prov'd the tomb of love,  
Which fact hath built o'er tenderness and truth.  
Tell me, will it make thy love more strong  
That a priest may say a well-learned  
Lesson o'er us ? Can he let and license  
That affection, which great God implant'd has  
Within our souls—a counterpart of that  
Which is on high ? Man's nature  
Rebelleth most when most 'tis forc'd.  
Thou wilt not love me more, nay, not so much,  
When thou hast sworn to be my husband.  
Ah ! many a dame knows to her cost  
That love in marriage oft is lost.

*Abelard.* I do entreat thee, Heloise,  
Persist not in this strange fantasy.

*Heloise.* Marriage is a bond fatal to philosophers.  
The cries of children and many an unwrit family  
care

Oft mean a great man's ruin.

*Abelard.* Great ! I shall be great  
When thou with me dost link thy fate.

*Heloise.* 'Tis not a woman's happiness quite  
To be a great man's mate. I do bethink  
That poor Xantippe not worse than others was.  
History relateth not her griefs, but those of  
Socrates.

He was much away from her—sat at Philip's  
Regal table, and did love to see his dancery ;  
Also much affected fair Aspasia's company,  
Who all the world in Pericles' name did rule.  
'Twas not for faithful wives that men  
Their mighty deeds accomplish'd, and  
Undying fame and glory won.

*Abelard.* I begin to love Xantippe ;  
Sure ne'er shrew had such a lovely pleader  
Ere thou becam'st her advocatus Diaboli.

*Heloise (lightly).* A wife's rebuke, or word in  
haste,  
Is never to a husband's taste ;  
And yet a low-born mistress may  
What she lists full freely say,

And from her lover all the while  
Gain a fond, approving smile.

*Philintus (outside).* Who would think that face  
enshrin'd

Such a bright and fearless mind ?

Truly old Sophocles said,

“ Wisdom's in the youngest head.”

*Abelard.* Belov'd, there is but one escape  
From a union with the hated Prince :  
'Tis by our marriage.

*Heloise.* If there be no other way, why then,  
adieu !

Too fondly, dearest Abelard, I love thee,

To see the eyes grow chill where once affection  
shone !

The best of husbands alter : lovers are our own.

*Abelard.* Did not Orpheus to Hell descend  
His wife to regain ?

*Heloise.* Widowers will not e'en to Paradise rise  
To seek for theirs !

*Philintus (outside).* O most excellent wench !  
Were all women of thy mould,  
How many men would rush into the noose  
That they now fain would 'scape !

*Abelard.* Love e'er distrustful is.  
Wert thou mine with the Church's blessing  
I would not apprehensive be.

*Heloise.* Thy very apprehension I would ever  
keep.

Custom would make e'en Venus self  
Grow stale and homely. Will the Church's  
blessing

Ward off the curse of habit ?

*Abelard.* 'Tis strange thy conduct should be  
right in all,

And yet thy arguments so wrong in this.

But come with me and look upon the stars,

And 'neath their holy glances will I strive

To turn thy thoughts toward mine own.

There is a turret yonder where thou'lt see

Heav'n gazing down with all her eyes on thee.

*(They pass out. The church bell rings loudly  
for visitors to depart. AGATON comes on  
the scene, and approaches PHILINTUS in  
affright.)*

*Agaton.* What mean these bells ?

I know—and yet I fear to think it.

Oh, that my mistress would return,

So we might fly from here !

*Philintus (philosophically).* “Fly” is a good  
word, wench.

I' faith, ye'll need some wings methinks,

To steer ye clear from hence.

I fear the gates are closing.

*(Enter FRIAR BONHOMME.)*

*Bonhomme* (*suspiciously*). Who is this woman ?

*Philintus*. My sister, good brother.

*Bonhomme* (*briefly*). The gates will close.

Deus vobiscum !

Prythee, know'st thou where they are

I am commanded here to marry ?

The learned Abelard hath bespoke

This night my service for his 'pousals.

*Philintus*. Ho ! That little matter ! To  
think on 't !

Why, man ! know'st thou not what genius is,

How first it will, and then it will not ?

Since thou hast seen him last,

He's changed his mind and forsworn

All marriage in this life.

'Tis a little matter, as I have said,

And is not worth the thinking. Prythee,

Take my sister Marie here

And show her to the gates.

[*Exit.*

*Bonhomme*. Good lack ! Church and State  
alike would starve

If they relied on genius ! Out on them,

Say I, the shiftless good-for-nothings !

[*Bells ring again.*

*Agaton*. Prythee, Father,  
Lead me to the gates.

*Bonhomme (insinuatingly).* Sweet is the name  
of Marie,  
And matched well to thy pretty face.

*Agaton.* I am not Marie,  
And I would be gone.

*Bonhomme.* Deus vobiscum, my fair maid ;  
Wilt come with me unto my cell,  
And there I'll show thee wonders many ?

*(Tries to take her hand.)*

*Agaton.* If thou dost not show me hence,  
I'll call so loud that e'en the bells'  
Brazen tongues will cease 'fore mine !

*Bonhomme.* Come on, come on, I'll show the  
way ;  
Anything but scandal, pray.

*Agaton.* Ay, and no pranks, good Friar, ere we  
part,  
For, see, I carry my stings ! *[Shows her nails.*

*Bonhomme.* Come away, I say ;  
I want to love, and not to fight.

Deus vobiscum !

*[Exeunt.*

*(The third and last peal of the bells is heard, and  
the clang of the iron gates being closed. The  
vespers sound in the distance.)*

“ From earthly passions, Jesu, pray  
Deliver us by night and day.”

(Enter ABELARD and HELOISE.)

*Abelard.* God ! Hark ! The final peal,  
O Heloise !

The gates are bolted, and the friar  
Is not here ! 'Tis terrible !  
'Tis terrible, my sweet, for thee !

(*The CHOIR sings in hushed cadence.*)

“ All worldly pleasures turn to pain ;  
They fly and never come again.”

*Abelard.* Thy reputation and thy fair fame  
Are closed with these gates. And I,  
Who never thought to do thee harm,  
Have wrong'd thee 'yond redemption !

(*Sinks despairingly into his chair.*)

*Heloise.* The mortal part of me is barr'd with-  
out,  
But here my soul and spirit kneel.

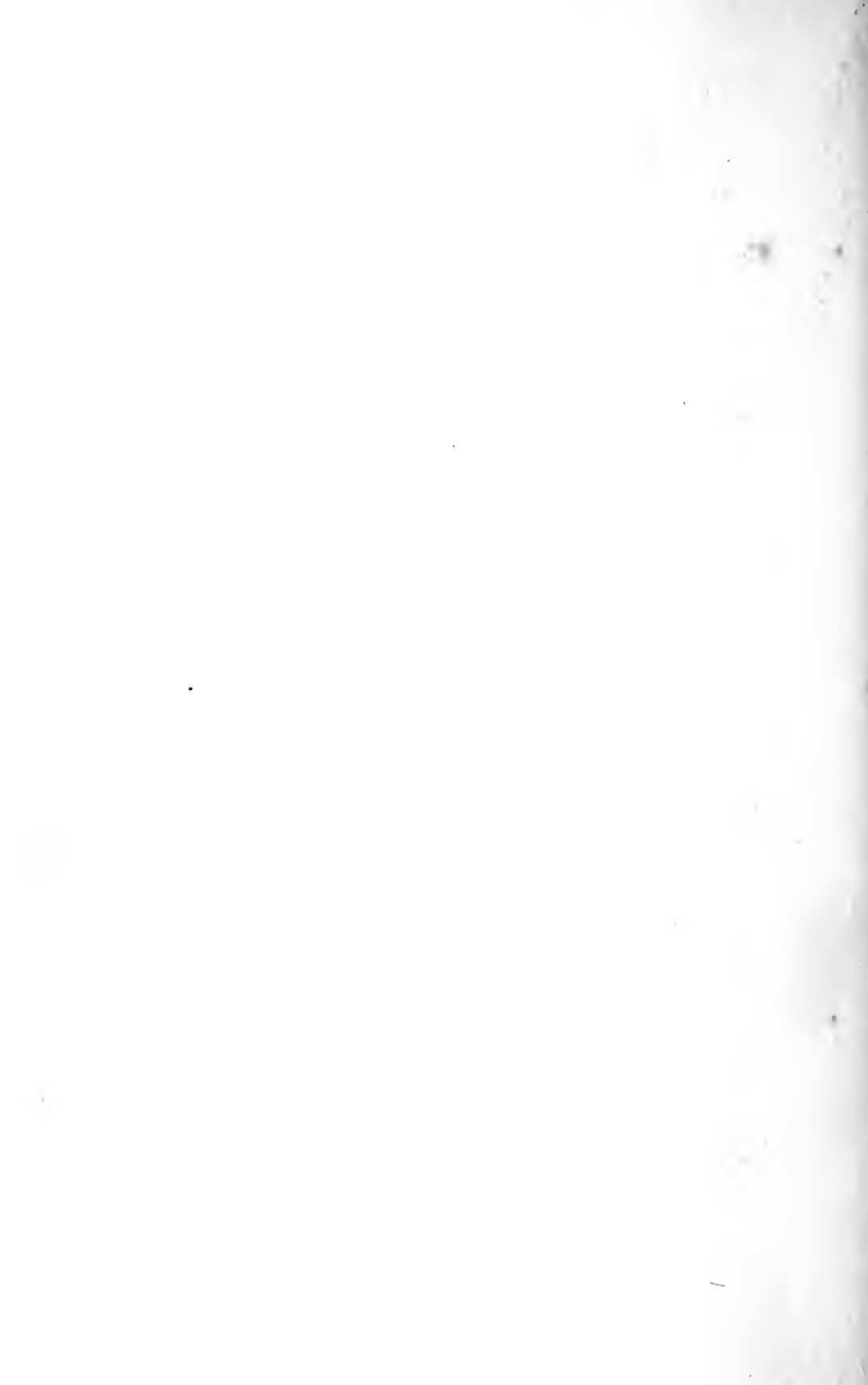
(*Kneels at ABELARD'S feet, who takes her in his  
arms. The CHOIR in still more hushed  
cadence sings.*)

“ Break thou these fearful charms that hold  
Men to lust and thirst of gold.

Miserere Domine ! ”



## Act III



## ACT III

### SCENE I

*An apartment in ARCHBISHOP'S FULBERT'S house.*

*FULBERT is seated in melancholy reverie, and  
ALBERIC and LOTULF stand near him, casting  
looks of hypocritical sympathy.*

*Fulbert (rousing himself).* Good friends, your  
countenances,

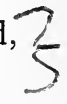
On which deceit could ne'er be writ,  
Too plainly tell me that ye bring no news  
Of her I loved so well. Yet, 'tis kind  
Of ye to come and bear an old man company.  
How long is it since Heloise did leave  
My heart and roof in loneliness?

*Alberic.* 'Tis gone a month, my lord.

*Fulbert.* A month to all the world,  
But oh! an age to me.

*Lotulf.* Would that we had news to bring!  
But in default, good lord, accept  
Our tender sympathy.

*Fulbert.* Grief hath this one solace : 'tis only then  
 We know the stuff of which our friends are made.  
 But who had thought she would have gone ?  
 Gone without a sign or single word !  
 I cradl'd her within these wither'd arms,  
 And croon'd in broken tones her baby songs.  
 Yet still—this all is nothing.  
 Our life is nothing, and our hopes are nothing,  
 And nothing are we in the grave.

*Alberic.* I pray, now she has fled,   
 That she hath truly wed her lover.

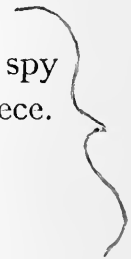
*Fulbert.* If I find it be not so,  
 'Twill be a day of sorrow for them both.

(*Enter ANSELM hurriedly.*)

*Anselm.* News ! news !  
 But ere I paint my picture for thine eyes,  
 Fulbert, thou must promise me,  
 By our friendship and thy high dignity,  
 To call in play an old man's calm,  
 And patient be unto the end.

*Fulbert (tremulously).* Where is she ?  
 And fares she well ?

*Anselm.* Too well, alas ! too well !  
 Better dead than be as she now is.  
 These nights and days full many a trusty spy  
 Of mine has searched all Paris for thy niece.  
 Alas ! that she should be akin to thee !  
 Just an hour by the clock there came



A hasty messenger like Mercury for speed,  
And as tho' his feet were helped with wings,  
To tell me what he found. It seems  
That Abelard doth own a small secluded house  
Near the city wall, and within this cage  
The once pure dove, thy Heloise, doth reign,  
His mistress. She ne'er walks abroad—  
So the gossip told him—but at night,  
Stealthily, like criminals, they together roam,  
Their arms entwined, their voices—faces—all  
Bespeaking their delight.

*Fulbert.* God's curses rain upon them !  
Kind Anselm, good Anselm, it yet may be  
Not so ill as thou dost think it.  
Mayhap the Church hath wedd'd them !

*Anselm.* Alas, my friend !  
E'en that one consolation is denied  
Thee in thy affliction deep. They are not wed.

*Fulbert.* Oh, friends ! if such ye be in truth,  
Stand not here in parley vain ; but come !  
Give me some weapons, that I may  
Strike this villain Abelard to death.  
Bestir ye ! 'tis not because my years  
Are great, my soul is old. Volcano like  
Th' vitality of injur'd men bursts forth in flames  
When 'tis thought extinct. My weapons, I say.  
And those who love me, follow me !

*Anselm.* I pray thee  
Calm thy wrath unseemly.

*Fulbert.* Had thine own honour's stronghold  
Thus assailed been, thy doting heart so stabb'd,  
Thou hadst not talked of wrath unseemly  
In measured tones. Were my case thine,  
Thou would'st have sought for vengeance  
E'en as I do now.

*Anselm.* Again, I pray thee, calm thyself, good  
Fulbert,  
For nought that's well done ever was  
Accomplished in a fume. I have a plan  
Of higher vengeance for thee, man.  
Passion's weapons are for boys to use,  
But men, whose blood is chilled by winters many,  
Have cooler brains to work withal.

*Alberic.* I beseech you, noble Fulbert,  
Be counsell'd by the Bishop Anselm,  
Who has your good at heart.

*Lotulf.* I join my prayer to Alberic's ;  
He who hastens slowly, hastens truly.

*Fulbert.* Alas ! ye all have noble hearts  
Save him, the wolf who stole my lamb.  
Bear with me !

*Anselm.* Listen to me ! My counsel's briefly  
this,  
That thou and I, and these two abbots worthy,  
Should these heartless lovers surprise,  
And arm'd with a guardian's right, thou canst  
Remove the guilty girl from Abelard's reach,  
While yet her sin is green.

*Alberic.* Abelard will not submit.

*Anselm.* Force must be used.

We'll rouse all Paris 'gainst him !

*Fulbert.* We can snatch her from the offender,  
But not her soul from the offence.

When Vice once charms a nature fine,  
The chalices of saints distasteful grow.

*Anselm.* I chanced, before I hither came, to  
meet

The Prince Amadeus. He broods and raves,  
Then raves and broods, on his elusive fair.  
He swears to be avenged on Abelard.

*Fulbert.* Then he doth know the shameful  
truth ?

*Anselm.* Evil news is quickly spread ; the  
good

Oft needs twice telling to be known.

*Fulbert.* What says he ?

*Anselm.* Once avenged on the guilty Abelard,  
He still would wed—such is his love—  
Thy frail but lovely niece.

*Fulbert.* Noble-hearted youth, who follows in  
the steps

Of his great Master, and the woman pardons  
Taken in fell sin !

*Anselm.* I have bidden him come hither.  
He shall go with us, if it please thee ;  
But he must vow to put a bridle to his tongue,  
Else he must stay behind.

*Alberic (aside to LOTULF).* What wants he with  
the Prince

If he may not speak ?

*Lotulf.* Know'st thou not the cunning Anselm ?  
He is a dainty feeder, and in his stews  
He likes variety of spice to lend them flavour.

*Fulbert.* Come ! let's meet the Prince half-way ;  
Then ho ! for vengeance on the traitor.

*Anselm (suavely).* Not vengeance, my good  
brother ;

'Tis justice thou wouldst have—justice,  
Nothing more ! Vengeance is profane.

*Fulbert (impatiently).* Call it what it pleases  
thee,

But Vengeance still it is with me.

If I am stung, feel'st thou the pain ?

If thou art hurt, should I complain ?

To know thyself be aye thy boast ;

He best can judge who feels the most.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE 2

*A chamber in ABELARD'S house. ABELARD has  
been reading aloud to HELOISE, who sits on  
a stool at his feet.*

*Heloise.* Oh, my belov'd, close the book ;  
Let us no more the words of others use  
When we have still our own. I'd sooner list  
Unto the meanest talk, so it be thine,  
Than all the wisdom of great Solomon.



*Abelard.* Dost thou know what Ovid says,  
my pearl ?

*Heloise.* A tender word of thine own composition

Is far more worth to me than all

His wit, pleasing tho' it be.

*Abelard (still looking at the book, reads)* " *Moribus et forma conciliandus amor,*"

Love must attracted be by beauty,

Both of mind and body.

*Heloise.* That is love's dissection.

Men cease to love when they do analyse.

*Abelard (reading).* " *Ut ameris, amabilis este,*"  
To be loved, one must be lovable.

*Heloise.* E'en so. Heat attracts heat, as fire  
doth fire,

So love draws love.

*Abelard (casting the book aside).* 'Tis said

Ambition puts to flight the little god,

But he in turn doth drive Ambition hence,

For Fame reigns paramount. Since Love

Hath me a captive ta'en, my thirst for pow'r

Hath died away. Full many a gallant knight

Hath cast aside his helm and hauberk bright

In the battle lists of Life, to dream away

The peaceful years entwin'd by peaceful love.

*Heloise.* Speak not thus, my Abelard ! I am  
thy faithful page,

To urge thee on to conquer in the strife,

And not to sleep in sluggard rest thy intellect  
away.

*(A street crier in the streets is heard shouting,  
"Who'll buy, who'll buy my verses on the  
loves of Abelard and Heloise—the famous  
Abelard and the fair Heloise? Who'll  
buy my verses?" The street crier's voice  
dies away in the distance. ABELARD, with  
an expression at once pained and sorrowful,  
looks pityingly at HELOISE.)*

*Abelard.* Oh, love! thou hast grown poor  
indeed,

When such lips do call aloud  
Thy fair pure name for public comment :  
That name which I have stol'n from thee  
Like a reckless thief who thinks of naught  
But self-enrichment. Would that I  
Had closed my eyes and heart to all thy charms,  
And but remained thy friend! For friendship  
never  
Injures those we love; which love ne'er fails to  
do.

*Heloise.* My love is like a refuge safe, and  
harbours

No regrets in all these tempests petty  
That human spite can scheme. My love  
Is built upon a rock which no storm can shake  
Or thunders cause to tremble.

Dost think a puff of wind can quake the Pyramids,  
Or hurricane loose Hesp'rus from on high ?  
Let all France, and not one poor weak voice,  
Cry out about our love, and I will stand  
Here by thy side, and say, " Well said, my  
country ! "

Or like fond echo, taking up their strain,  
Resound the words a thousand times again.

*Abelard.*                      How I do love thee !

Witness, ye hours, and ye nights and days,  
That flitt'd have like shadows of a dream,  
That all my work it is to count thy looks ;  
My seasons are thy smiles, thy tears and words ;  
The days change to weeks, and flutter hence like  
birds

Of Paradise upon the western breeze.  
The sun doth watch me loving, then the moon  
Relieves his weary looking on. But ev'ry day  
To me is though I saw thee first—belov'd !

(HELOISE and ABELARD embrace tenderly. *During this episode PHILINTUS steps in the apartment softly, unseen by the lovers.*)

*Philintus (aside).* Faith ! I could outswear  
Satan at my folly  
That I did stay the friar from their marrying.  
Had this been done, these amorosities had ceased  
By now. A man could only thus embrace

Uncertainty, or a mistress fair. Marriage  
Is a game of chance, which, were women wise,  
None would play at.

(*Aloud*) Abelard, I beg  
A moment with thy private ear.

*Abelard (turning towards him, not without some  
confusion).* Dear Philintus, is it thou ?

*Philintus.* 'Tis a brave likeness of Philintus,  
If I be not he.

*Abelard.* Any news astir ?

*Philintus.* I've come to tell it thee,  
If fair Heloise will but grant me leave.

*Heloise.* We have a common cause to serve :  
You with friendship, and I with love. [*Exit.*

(*ABELARD seats himself in an armchair ; PHIL-  
INTUS stands behind him and rests his elbow  
on the back.*)

*Abelard.* Well, out with thy news !  
Could it not have bided, or didst fear  
It had in an hour grown stale ?

*Philintus.* Hear me first,  
And keep thy jests till afterwards.

*Abelard.* How grave thou art, Philintus !  
Perchance thou hast not supp'd ?  
A hungry man is always mad or melancholy.

*Philintus.* Heigho ! I have no list to eat.

*Abelard.* 'Tis a bad sign.  
Perchance thou art in love ?

*Philintus.* I never fall so deep  
But I can eat and sleep my fill.

*Abelard.* Certes ! Thou art as grave as a  
          churchyard ;  
What ails thee, man ?

*Philintus (aside).* Oh, that I could wake the  
          ambition of thy soul,  
Which thou art killing in love's lethargy !  
Man yearns for that which is denied him,  
And I love that which I did ne'er possess—  
Much learning. I see it dying in thy heart,  
And feel as though a darling child of mine  
Was being slain by murderous hands !

*Abelard (yawning).* I wait.

*Philintus (aloud).* Thou know'st that I keep  
          watch for thee.  
I just have learnt that what ye do, all  
          know ;  
All Paris sings about thy love.

*Abelard.* A street hawker did cry the song  
Beneath our very window even now.  
Is this thy wondrous news ?

*Philintus (aside).* He shows no more amaze  
          than I had said,  
“ I hear the snowy Alps are passing cold,”  
Or that “ fire is hot,” that “ winds do blow,”  
Or “ water's wet,” or any of those thousand  
          platitudes  
That daily life is charged with.

(*Aloud*) 'Tis not all. Dost remember thy  
Great work on "Man's Equality" ?

*Abelard (warming to the subject as he speaks of it).* The one I took five years to write ?  
Which was my labour night and day,  
In which I strove all men to teach  
That newer thought doth wisdom bring.  
I tried to show that musty rules  
That dogmas of the schools worn out  
Should be foregone ; and from the dust  
Of bigot and pedantic lore  
Phoenix-like there should arise,  
Clear and bright as light of day,  
This highest of all earthly creeds—  
That truest pray'rs are noble deeds.

*Philintus (bending over the back of the chair, and speaking with deliberate emphasis).* Thy  
enemies in thy absence here  
Have all attacked thee. With damning im-  
putations,  
As false as they are cunning, with truth  
And lying strangely wedd'd, they do place  
A purport on thy book thou didst ne'er intend.  
Thy favourite work so dear to thee,  
Which cost three years of labour and of thought,  
Has been condemned and by the Council spurned—  
It hath been sentenc'd to be burned.

*Abelard (with despairing wildness).* O Sorrow !  
what are all thy other shafts

Compar'd with this arrow from thy bow ?  
My brain child burn'd ! That offspring fair  
With which I travail'd in joy and pain,  
Like a mother with her first-born son !  
My book, in whose two covers beat my heart  
And throb'd my brain—not, O Philintus, for  
a selfish end,  
But for enlightenment—darken'd minds !

*Philintus (aside).* Had I known how he would  
take it,  
I had not told him. To gain our ends  
We call a whirlwind to our aid  
When a puff of air would answer.

*(Aloud)* Hast forgotten Heloise ?  
Dost thou not love her more than thy cold book ?

*Abelard (with a certain irritation of manner).*

Certes ! I love her, but that love is  
different ;

My human love is mine ; but my other love  
Is taken from me, and is mine no more.  
Not only is it taken from me, but  
It is outraged and violated. I'd rather had  
My hand burn'd off than they should  
Thus have robb'd my book of virtue !

*Philintus.* Abelard ! take heed, I pray, the  
angry Fates

Do give thee not more potent cause for wrath  
Than thou now hast. I have ever seen  
That they who rave o'er little losses

Soon punished are with heavier crosses.

(*Aside*) To reproach I came ; I stay to preach.

*Abelard.* My book is burn'd ! Freedom's  
spirit

And much other good for man was shown  
Between its covers ! War was wag'd  
Against hypocrisy and rich men's tyranny,  
For justice and the right of intellectual man  
Against patrician brain and worthlessness  
Proud not of achievement, but of ancestry.  
Thou speak'st as tho' I had no cause to  
grieve,

As though my work were a tale about a rat.

*Heloise (from within).* Abelard !

*Abelard (starting).* Speak on, O my beloved !  
Thy voice charms hence my evil thoughts,  
As David sang away Saul's spirit black.

*Philintus.* Love her, for she is worthy,  
But forget not thy book burners !

*Heloise (from within).* It groweth late, so let us  
wander

In the garden yet awhile, for Luna soon  
Will close her lamp and dim the stars  
Like thrifty housewife cautious of her candles.

*Abelard.* Let moon and stars both cease to  
shine

When light glows from thine eyes divine.

*Heloise (within).* Nay ; their light must too  
grow sere,



When thou, their rival, dost appear.

*Philintus (aside).* His book is burnt ; and his  
love is flaming !

He breathes an air of fire like a salamander.

*(Loud knocking without, mingled with the sound of  
tumult, and many voices in altercation.)*

*Abelard.* Who is there ?

*Philintus.* Ask rather who is not there ?

By the noise, methinks, all Hell hath gotten a  
holiday,

And fain would spend it jollily with us.

*(Opens the window, and calls down.)*

What would ye ? Who are ye all ?

Belike ye are mistaken in locality, my friends.

This is not a madhouse, where fools

Can enter without reasonable permit. Begone !

*A Voice outside speaking in tones of dignity and  
command.* I am Fulbert, Archbishop of  
Paris.

I seek admittance, and to see my niece

Who lives within these walls.

*Philintus.* Thou may'st be Archbishop of  
Paradise, i' faith !

But no man shall claim an entrance here

Without due right. This house pertains to  
one

Monsieur Pierre Abelard.

*Abelard.* Fulbert ! Alas ! I've wronged him.  
Grant him admittance.

*Philintus.* If thou hast wronged him, thou  
shouldst shun him,  
Not invite him hither. There are other mad-  
men.

*Abelard.* Oh ! pleasure's tide  
Hath e'er an ebb of sorrow. The golden sands  
Of happiness are mark'd with whiten'd bones of  
woe.

There never were two loving in this life  
But someone grieved to see them so.  
Let them all enter, good my friend ;  
Thus ills must come and joys will end.

*Philintus* (*great tumult — calling out of the  
window*). By'r Lady ! if ye all assault'd  
thus

The gates of heav'n with your virtues  
As ye do our doors with kicks and blows,  
We had not need to have so many  
Priestly comforters and soul physicians.  
I come, ye wolves, to let ye in the fold !

[*Exit.*

(*HELOISE enters in haste and some alarm.*)

*Heloise.* Come what may, they shall not part  
us,  
For here will I cling despite their rage.

Piecemeal they may tear me from thee,  
But I will never go until thou  
Bidd'st me hence.

*Abelard.* They shall not hurt thee whilst I  
live,

Nor touch thee with their impious hands  
Whilst I am near. I shall thy buckler be and  
shield.

I—alas !—who have wronged thee most—  
Shall now thy saviour be. Would that thou  
Hadst given me wedded right to call thee mine  
So none should dare to wrest thee from me !

*(Enter FULBERT, ANSELM, LOTULF, ALBERIC,  
AMADEUS, PHILINTUS, and CITIZENS. ABE-  
LARD stands protectingly before HELOISE.)*

*Fulbert (in tones of suppressed rage).* Abelard !  
like a thief thou cam'st at night  
And stole my one ewe lamb. I'll not  
Descant on thy ingratitude, base tho' it be,  
But ask this simple thing of thee ;—  
Is Heloise thy leman wretched, or as an honour'd  
wife

Do I behold her ? If the Church hath sanctified  
Thy union, I at once will hie me hence,  
And ere I leave, beg grace for this intrusion.

*Abelard (after a pause).* Heloise is my spouse  
In heav'n's eyes alone.

*Fulbert.* Oh, vile seducer of the innocent !  
Hearken unto him, ye friends and citizens !  
He gloats o'er the wreck of virtue fair,  
Which, like a tempest foul and all-destroying,  
He alone hath compass'd. Accursed libertine !  
Who revels in the ruin he has caused,  
And then would gloze it o'er with canting piety.  
" His spouse before the eyes of heaven ! "  
He means his wife through devil's tricks.  
Too well I know the meaning of this treachery.  
She was not highly placed enow to be his spouse !  
The stock she sprang from was too little known  
To add a lustre to the Canon's fame,  
And thus he 'spouses her in " heaven's eyes,"  
                  forsooth,  
For fear that man's should be too piercing !

*Heloise (tearing away from the restraining arms  
of ABELARD, who endeavours to withhold  
her). Mine must be the blame ! And  
shall I fear*

To own the laws that love, not priests, have made ?  
Love free as air, when bound by earthly ties,  
Doth lose its charm, and like a rainbow fades.  
If it were not thus, tame Hymen would not  
                  show  
That love's by fetters slain and never fostered.  
Were Heav'n's King Himself to offer me His throne,  
For all that's Heaven's I would not change my  
                  love.

*Fulbert.* He hath bewitched her,  
And much love hath made her mad!  
Oh, that those lips should foul blaspheme  
Which once ne'er moved except in pray'r  
Or gentle words of wisdom! Doubly accursed  
    Abelard,  
To blast both soul and body!

*Abelard.* I pray thee, Fulbert, list to me!  
I do love thy ward tenderly, deeply,  
Devotedly, passionately, and to espouse her  
Is my ambition's dream.

*Fulbert.* Coward! Add that to thy other sins!  
Thou speak'st thus for thou'rt afraid,  
Because I come to wrest her from thee!

*Abelard.* Thou dar'st not do it! Not Death  
    himself  
Shall steal her from my arms!

*(HELOISE cowers for protection, and ABELARD stands by her menacing those around. PHILINTUS, with a half-drawn weapon, seems disposed to attack any of FULBERT'S people who should make a move in the direction of the lovers.)*

*Anselm.* Peace, my friends! tho' I own 'tis hard  
To stay your virtuous hands from doing hurt  
To him whose crime so greatly merits punishment  
    condign.

*Abelard.* These soul-hounds of the Church !  
How loftily they deal with others' morals,  
How lax and easy with their own !

*Amadeus.* Give up this woman to her kins-  
man,  
Thou thief that stole her from her rightful lover !

*Abelard.* Thou prince of liars, she lov'd thee not !

*Heloise.* Hold, Prince ! From me you had an  
empty word,

A loveless promise ; a shell without a kernel.

*Anselm.* I have heard it said that purest minds,  
When once o'ercast, have uglier bent  
Than basest criminals. Abelard hath  
Bewitched her crystal thoughts into  
A stream of turgid foulness.

*First Cit. (in the crowd).* 'Tis certain that this  
Abelard's  
None other than a wizard.

*Second Cit.* We must look to our own wives  
and daughters.

*Third Cit.* Mark you not that hellish fire  
Blazing from his eyes ?

*First Cit.* He's too handsome for a proper man.  
I've heard tell the Evil One can garb  
Himself in beauty's form, as we would  
Clothe ourselves in Sunday habit.

*Fulbert (to HELOISE).* I order thee to come with  
me  
Unto my house, which thou hast dishonoured.

If thy spirit still rebels against my wish,  
I'll have thee dragg'd like drink-sod drab  
Thro' the streets of Paris. Thy paramour  
Shall taste the staves of all our honest citizens,  
An' if they but do their duty he shall die thereof.

*Abelard.* Old man! thy threats fall idly on my  
heart

Like snow-flakes on the ground already hoar.  
I fear not thee, nor all enraged France  
Were she to rise like Hecate with the Fates  
And fire-belching Furies in her wake  
To seize and rend me in such puny atomies  
That the ocean's grains of sand were great  
compared.

Hath not Nature sentenced thee to death  
E'en as thou wouldst me? Am I dreaming fool  
That I in death should see aught save  
Eternity's birthday? My life's sin is that I love,  
And with that crime upon my soul, old man,  
I'll speed unto those gracious regions where  
That dear Lord who lov'd so well on earth  
Shall judge me better than ye do.

*Anselm.* Thou prat'st of love and piety  
But actest like a fiend.

*Alberic.* Shame upon thee, Abelard!  
Thou hast the Church disgraced.

*Lotulf.* Fie upon thee!

*Abelard.* Ye but a pretext make of Fulbert's  
grievance

To vent your coward spite on me.  
 The fame that I have gain'd hath rous'd  
 Inexorable malice in your breasts,  
 And snake-like Envy with poison'd tongue doth  
     spit  
 Beneath this show of Fulbert's cause espousing.  
 Your falseness makes of Virtue's self a vicious  
     thing,  
 And Vice by ye despis'd, turns virtuous.  
*Fulbert.* Enough! Enough is said. Come!

*(HELOISE clings to ABELARD, but, surrounded  
 and overwhelmed by numbers, and despite  
 ABELARD'S strenuous efforts, she is dragged  
 away from him. PHILINTUS vainly tries  
 to succour the lovers, but is himself over-  
 borne.)*

*Abelard (who is withheld by citizens).* Old man,  
     for myself I would not plead  
 For life, from e'en the cruellest death  
 That hatred could devise; but for her I love,  
 I would abase my manhood's strength  
 Till saintly meekness were but pride compar'd.  
 She is the hapless victim of my guilt.  
 I alone have caused her heart to stray  
 From the narrow path of worldly rectitude.  
 Mine is all the sin, and mine should be the blame,  
 If Justice be no myth, and Mercy but a name.



*Heloise.* Not all cold truths to heav'n fly;  
E'en angels love a selfless lie.

(HELOISE is by force compelled to leave ABELARD  
with FULBERT and ANSELM; LOTULF, AL-  
BERIC, and some attendants following.)

*Abelard* (who is still withheld by citizens).

Loose me, ye fools and knaves unmannerly!  
Do ye think that I would be so mad  
To run out in the streets and chase  
The Lady Heloise as tho' she were a trull  
And I a braggart lover? Unloose, I say!

*Amadeus.* If they unloose thee, thou wilt  
meet  
With less delicate handling from me.  
Thou'lt fly from Scylla to Charybdis.

*Abelard.* What, whelp! hast thou not gone  
With thy companion wolves?

*Amadeus.* Nay, nor like to, with such carrion  
As thou left for me to feast on.

*Abelard.* Pah! shall I heed the sting of a gnat  
When my heart is gnawed by the monster Grief?  
Go thy ways, good youth!

*Amadeus.* I'll give thee a lesson first!

(Draws.)

*Abelard.* What! with that rod wouldst teach  
thy master?

*Philintus.* Here is mine ! Defend thyself !

*(Gives his weapon to ABELARD. They fight.)*

*First Cit.* Prince Amadeus is a master of the rapier ;

My son who worketh at his armourer's  
Did tell me so. He hath twenty-five Toledo blades,  
An' a score or so of true Damascus steel.

*Second Cit.* And mayhap not master be o' one !

*Philintus.* Dost remember, Abelard, that pretty  
trick  
The Austrian fencing-master taught thee in  
Vienna ?

*Abelard.* Is this the one thou mean'st ?

*(By a skilful thrust he sends AMADEUS' rapier  
spinning out of the latter's hands.)*

*First Cit.* He has him now at his weapon's  
point.

*Second Cit.* Like a beetle at the mercy of a  
schoolboy's pin.

*Third Cit.* Will he despatch him ?

*Amadeus.* I ask no mercy at thy hands.  
Despatch ! strike home ! as I would do  
In thy victorious place.

*Abelard.* My love hath taught me to be  
merciful.  
Take thy life, I'll none of it !

*[Exit ABELARD.]*

## Act IV

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

## ACT IV

*(After three months.)*

### SCENE I

*Lecture-room in the University of Paris. ABE-  
LARD is sitting in his lecturer's chair with his  
face buried in his hands dejectedly. Near him  
stands PHILINTUS.*

*Philintus.* Rouse thy spirit, Abelard! This  
inanition  
Is a moral decay, and thou art like fair fruit  
With canker at its core. Soon the Council  
And the students will attend. Surely thou  
Wilt not deposed be without a word  
In refute of their baseless charges?

*Abelard.* There are some calumnies, my friend,  
'Gainst which e'en Innocence herself  
Would courage lose.

*Philintus.* I pray thee, rouse thyself!

*Abelard.* Grant me peace, I do beseech thee.

*Philintus.* Peace is gain'd by war.

*Abelard.* I thirst to be at peace. I yearn to  
leave

The world and all its troublous ways alone.  
Let the Council come, I've naught to say.  
Oh, Philintus ! when heavy sorrows fall,  
They cover, like a pall, our best endeavours.  
We still may strive, but the freshness,  
The bloom of all our brightest hopes, is gone.  
Gone—never to return ! With heavy hearts  
And jad'd souls we plod and plod,  
And yet each step doth only bring us  
Near to that goal of all mortality—the grave.

*Philintus.* All this grieving for a woman !  
Which one of them is weeping worth ?  
Too well I know their changing moods !  
When you will, they will not ;  
When you will not, then of course—they will !

*Abelard.* Three months have pass'd,  
And ne'er a word from Heloise.

*Philintus.* The letters thou hast given me,  
Faithful have I delivered to Agaton,  
Her woman ; who in turn did vow  
To give them to her mistress.

*Abelard.* Is it possible that she could be so  
fair  
And yet so false ?

*Philintus.* Were she not fair, she'd not be  
false.

To be beautiful, and therewith to live in virtue,  
Savours more of gods than of frail humanity.

*Abelard.* Thou hast deliver'd all my notes,  
And I have answer to not one of them.  
What countless pages I have written  
With passion so devouring, that methought  
The words themselves had been consumed in  
flames,  
So burning did they pour from out  
My pierc'd and anxious heart.

*Philintus.* So thou who hast so oft derisively  
describ'd  
The wiles of woman, art now their slave,  
Caught in the self-same snare as any dolt  
Who thinks there's truth in any of their smiles.  
Their sex are only great when they work ill.  
Who was it lost Paradise for us ? A woman.  
Who caused the downfall of fair Troy ? A  
woman.

What made wise Solomon to fail ? Woman.  
Damnable ! heartless ! subtle woman,  
With paint'd face and mind corrupt,  
Innocence feigning, whilst her scheming mind  
Outstrips the devil's !

*Abelard.* O Friendship ! upon what dost thou  
presume ?  
'Tis well thou art Philintus ; none else  
Had dar'd to speak against the noblest heart  
That ever beat on earth.

*Philintus.* Thus reason'd Antony, and that  
reason  
Lost him all the world. Thus reasons Abelard,  
And that reason, or the lack of it,  
Will lose him all his world as well.  
Suppose that I were Abelard, and Abelard  
Philintus,  
Then Abelard would say to me, "Thy love hath  
fled.  
Thou writ'st to her, she answers not ;  
Ergo, pray, what love hath she for thee,  
Who heeds thee not e'en tho' thy soul  
Writhes in hellish torture ?" Thy love's fickle.  
All things yield beneath Time's sickle.  
Lovers' vows, hopes—beauty—all,  
Ripe and unripe, bow and fall ;  
All things go from whence they came,  
And Death claims all but shining Fame.  
*Abelard (meditatively, with bitterness).* Fame !  
'tis gone from me ;  
They stole it when they burned my book.  
*Philintus.* Build thyself another shrine of  
glory.  
*Abelard.* Life is short, the world's injustice  
long.  
*Philintus.* The Council and the students will  
shortly come.  
*Abelard.* Let them ; I will hence.  
*Philintus.* I pray thee, speak to them ;



Show them that thy spirit  
Is not quench'd as they would have it be.

*Abelard.* Her silence and my book's destruction

Do make me mad.

*Philintus.* Thy madness is a silent one.

*Abelard.* It sometimes takes that fit.

*Philintus.* Never have I heard of it.

*Abelard.* The ashes grey of love's neglect'd  
passion chill

As water thrown on fire. Heloise hath grown  
cold.

*Philintus.* But thy book did ne'er hurt thee !  
Love and friendship often sever :  
Books remain true friends for ever.

*Abelard.* My dead book bids me speak,  
But fain would I be dumb.

*(Noise without.)*

*Philintus.* They come !

*(Enter ANSELM, taking the lead of the Council,  
followed by STUDENTS and CITIZENS.)*

*Anselm.* Pierre Abelard ! thou art the author  
of a work heretical,  
In which thou hast expound'd views  
Contrary to the law and order of things ordain'd  
These hundred years. Thy spirit revolutionary

Hath fill'd the learned Council with alarm,  
And they, the nation's guides, and I, their unworthy chief,

Do take this opportunity to expel thee  
From this great University. It is decreed  
That thou no more our sons shall teach  
To wander from the beaten paths  
Their ancestors did tread before them.  
That which hath suffic'd for sire  
Is surely good enough for son.

We charge thee, therefore, leave this place  
For ever ! Hast aught to say in thy defence ?

*Abelard.* Ye condemn me as a heretic, and  
burn my book.

Reversing law, ye sentence first, then call for my  
defence.

If I absolve your act, I blame myself ;  
And if I blame ye, I absolve myself.  
One way I must offend. Yet, if I speak,  
I must truly, or not at all.

My heart is too deject'd far to deal in quibbles.  
Suffering and sorrow press the truth from men  
E'en as some flow'rs, that more perfume yield  
The longer they are crush'd : and pale adversity  
Doth teach us more than all the wisdom  
Of great Socrates. If I have sinn'd, as ye have  
said,

It is unpardonable ; and unpardonably have ye  
punish'd me.

When a malefactor is arraign'd for treason,  
He first is heard, and sentenc'd afterward.  
Is there a crime in Guilt's long calendar  
That places man beyond the pale of lawful  
Justice? If there be, I am the basest wretch  
That e'er disgrac'd the bar of judgment:  
And if the learned Council thus decree,  
What weight has one man's word against a  
Council's?

When I did meet the wisest man of every  
land

That came to France to fight in learning's  
Tournament, you did not then condemn the  
heretic

Who fought and won the palm for France's  
glory;

Yet taught he then the self-same thoughts that  
stand

Reviled now.

*First Cit.* Abelard speaks truly. My eldest  
son,

Who once brought naught but sorrow home  
Unto his dam and me, hath chang'd since  
He hath attend'd Abelard's school.

*Second Cit.* Ay! My Jean, that wild third  
lad o' mine,

Was once a very fiend for stubbornness;  
But since this Abelard hath taught him,  
He is as mild as butter-milk.

*Anselm.* Didst thou not say in thy condemned  
book—

How well do I recall those words seditious !—  
That people, by a monarch governed,  
Were naught but slaves, coerced to labour  
In body and mind. Thou didst vituperate  
Inheritance and lordly birth, and held  
That these were naught compar'd to man's  
Own attainments and natural gifts ?

*Abelard.* My lord, I said that labour, be it  
what it may,  
Is nobler than dull sloth, though that  
Did flaunt a crown, and strut in purple.

*Anselm.* Further, thou didst write that  
neither  
King nor noble could inherit worth.  
These be traitor's thoughts in treason's words.  
If a monarch be not great—who is ?  
And if our nobles be not high—who are ?

*Abelard.* My lord, my words were these : not  
ancestry,  
Or wealth, or combination of birth's circum-  
stances  
Can ever make men great ; but work  
And strenuous conduct alone entitle man  
To fame and glory.

*Anselm.* Thou utter'st treason 'gainst thy  
King,  
Thy Church, and Constitution.

*Abelard.* Better that, than I should traitor be  
unto humanity.

Better rot in silence 'neath the earth,  
Than serve the god Hypocrisy.

*Anselm.* A self-convict'd heretic and atheist  
art thou !

*Abelard.* I stand condemn'd a heretic, and ye  
burn my book !

How can a book so injure that ye burn it ?  
'Tis a thing inanimate, and did not write itself.  
If aught should have been burnt, 'twas my  
hand,  
Or the conceiving brain that bade the hand to  
write.

Why mutilate the noblest part of me—  
My thought—and let the worst go free ?  
Nay ! not in my work the potent evil lies,  
But in the prejudice of cruel, jaundic'd eyes.  
Unjust judges the jury lead astray ;  
Humble virtue falls, and evil holdeth sway.

*First Stu.* 'Tis my belief, and that belief is  
strong,  
The prisoner is right, and all his judges wrong.

*Second Stu.* The Council all are jealous !  
Envious old drones ;  
Half of them are stings, the other half are bones.

*Third Stu.* Small wonder that he looks so pale  
and sad,  
With such grief as he has had ;

Envy snatches hence his fame,  
Spite assails his once great name.

*First Stu.* Let the Council go hang ! We'll  
none of them.

Abelard hath nobly instruct'd us, and Abelard  
Must bide with us !

*Second Stu.* If Abelard be forc'd to leave,  
Let us all follow him !

*Third Stu.* Bravely said ! Where Abelard  
doth go,  
There we shall have our University,  
E'en tho' the green grass be our floor,  
And heav'n's blue skies our vault'd domes !

*Abelard.* Patience, dear students all ! I can  
but leave ;  
My death is not resolv'd upon.

*First Stu.* If thou dost leave, great Abelard, I  
swear,  
By God's own might, to enter ne'er  
This University again ! And ye, my brothers,  
What say ye ?

*Students.* We'll follow Abelard !

*First Cit.* If Abelard's expell'd, I will with-  
draw my son.

*Second Cit.* And I mine !

*Third Cit.* And I !

*Abelard.* But, friends, there are other pro-  
fessors !

*First Stu.* But none like thee ! If thou do go,

A University of wise professors will exist,  
Without a student to be taught !

*Citizens.* } Ha ! Ha ! Ha !  
*Students.* }

*Second Cit.* Out upon this Council of evil !  
Give 'em a taste of the tail o' th' Devil.

*(Students raise ABELARD on their shoulders.  
Some Citizens and Students shout and  
hurrah around him. Others chase and beat  
ANSELM and the rest of the Council with  
sticks and cudgels.)*

## SCENE 2

*An ante-room in ARCHBISHOP FULBERT'S house.*

*ANSELM, as though by accident, meets AGATON,  
who endeavours to pass him hurriedly.*

*Anselm.* Whither so fast, wench ?

*Agaton.* Oh, my lord, I know not how to answer  
you ;

Full of fears am I, with what I have perform'd,  
In obedience to your stern behests.

Heav'n you have promised me, and yet Hell  
Reigns in my throbbing breast.

*Anselm (menacingly).* Wench, thou hast more  
letters !

As thou valu'st thy immortal soul,  
Deliver them at once to me, else  
E'erlasting flames shall be thy lot hereafter.

*Agaton.* My lord, I do beseech you give me  
leave  
To render but this one to Lady Heloise ;

*(Shows letter.)*

The only one, of all the many I have had  
To give her. Messire Philintus told me  
That Monseigneur is like to die with grief,  
That ne'er one of all his thousand letters  
Hath had answer. My lord, I pray,  
Do grant me leave to give her this,  
And I will to Purgatory go fo't !

*Anselm.* I tell thee thou wilt go to Hell  
For everlasting ; and, e'er dying, still live on  
In immortal agony. Give me the letter, I say !  
Damnation seize thee, wench, dost hear ?  
Abelard's letters are accurs'd, and even I,  
Holy as I am, do wash mine hands  
Thrice in sacred water ere I touch  
The godly things of earth again.

*Agaton (giving letter to ANSELM).* Oh ! is there  
grace in acting right,  
When all one's heart would fain do wrong ?

*Anselm (unctuously).* The path of holiness is  
thorny,  
And woman's nature corrupt.

*(Takes the letter, and crosses himself devoutly as  
he does so.)*



This act of virtue will absolve thee  
Many a sin. Hast thou, perchance,  
Another letter ?

*Agaton (beseechingly).* My lord !

*Anselm (menacingly).* Wouldst brave Hell's  
torments, woman ?

*Agaton (giving another letter).* Alas ! she wept  
so when she gave me this,  
As tho', poor soul, her heart would break.

*Anselm.* Will tears of wickedness allay the heat  
Of thy parch'd tongue when thou art burning ?

*Agaton (crossing herself).* Jesu ! Marie !

*Anselm.* Tell me the truth, wench ! Hast e'er  
Delivered letter of Heloise to Abelard ?  
Are these the first thou wouldst withhold ?

*Agaton (trembling).* Since you said, my lord,  
that the Devil  
Would fetch me hence alive if I but gave one,  
I swear that you alone have had them all.

*Anselm.* 'Tis well. Get thee to the chapel ;  
I'll shrive thee anon for thy concern  
In this most black affair.

[*Exit AGATON.*

*Anselm.* Foolish oaf ! not thine is woman's art  
Of deft hypocrisy, else better hadst thou serv'd  
thy cause.

Deception oft can work what Truth would spoil,  
And Virtue's reticence is Cunning's opportunity.  
What says Abelard ?

*(Tears open one of the letters given by AGATON,  
and reads) :—*

“ Beloved, still beloved HELOISE :  
These lines, the last, are from the hapless wretch  
Once by thee held dear ! Should my messenger  
No answer bring to this my missive,  
Then shall I know that for ever changed  
Is Heloise to me. Then will I  
At once the binding vows of priesthood take,  
To render me invulnerable to thy deception.  
Alas ! how easy ’tis the world to throw aside,  
But oh, how difficult ’tis to renounce love !  
The world’s injustice, its friendships feign’d,  
Its tawdry pomps and aimless vanities,  
Have no charms for me. But my soul  
Is fraught with anguish that I must lose thee,  
And as reason no consolation is in despair,  
If thou art silent, to Heav’n I will offer  
My heart’s cold ashes, whose fire so brightly burn’d  
One time for Heloise. ABELARD.”

*Anselm.* One priest the more !

*(Tears the letter into fragments and puts the  
pieces into his pocket.)*

What says Heloise ?

*(Opens the other letter, and reads) :—*

“ Cruel, but well-beloved ABELARD :  
Thy silence has o’erwhelm’d my heart  
With suffering and grief. Daily have I written thee

For these long months without response.  
Were thy vows like the summer birds that fly  
When winter's nigh ?  
If thou art silent still, I shall pattern take  
Of thy inconstancy and wed Prince Amadeus.  
In pity, Abelard, write one little word to me.  
The pray'r of all around me is  
That I thy hated rival should espouse.  
The Pope himself enjoins me in a letter  
To wed the Prince for fear of his displeasure.  
Pity me, and write to thy forsaken      HELOISE."

*Anselm (tearing the letter into fragments, and  
placing them in his pocket). One wife the  
more in the world of marriage !*

Revenge is dear to human hearts as love of Fame.  
Now shall I be even with the hated Abelard.

*(Enter FULBERT.)*

*Fulbert.* Friend ! what had I done without thee ?  
Since thou beneath my roof hast stay'd,  
Thy counsel and thy weighty presence both  
Have me supported 'neath mine affliction.

*Anselm.* How fares thy niece ?

*Fulbert.* She's in her chamber weeping, and her  
grief  
Is such that all do weep in sympathy with her.  
Alas ! she mourns the lover, not the fault.  
I read to her a message from the Pope,  
In which he doth command her make amends  
For her sin by lawful marriage to the Prince.

I join'd my prayers unto the Holy Father's  
mandate,

And she entreateth me to wait until to-morrow  
For her answer. Why till the morrow ?

I cannot tell.

*Anselm (aside).* I could tell thee why "till  
to-morrow "

She would have thee tarry. She hopes an answer  
Will forthcome unto her letter,—that one  
Which now snugly lies in tatters in my pocket.

(*Aloud to FULBERT*) Will she consent to-morrow  
to wed the Prince ?

*Fulbert.* She hath promised me all I should ask  
If I but wait until the morrow.

*Anselm.* I counsel thee to brook no more delay ;  
Marry her outright for fear of Abelard.

*Fulbert.* 'Tis my intention. Therefore I be-  
seech thee,

If Heloise consents, arrange the nuptials,  
Appoint the priest, invite the guests,  
In pomp and state befitting such a ceremony.

*Anselm.* I will haste to Notre Dame, and ordain  
All dignities pertaining to a noble marriage.

*Fulbert.* But why so fast ? Heloise will  
promise me

Naught until the morrow.

*Anselm.* When a woman half promises,  
Take it as a whole. She will consent.

*Fulbert.* Thy words like wine do give me courage.

Let us each to our appoint'd work  
In these great nuptials. Anon, good friend !  
My right, true friend, anon ! [Exit.  
Anselm. Old dotard ! What ardently he  
wishes, he hastens  
To believe. He begg'd of me t'appoint  
The priest, and so I vow will I.  
To-morrowdoth Abelard take the vow of celibacy—  
None but he shall be the priest  
That joins the pair in wedd'd bonds.

## SCENE 3

*The interior of Notre Dame, showing altar magnificently decked with flowers and precious offerings. On one side of the altar is an enormous golden cross, at the base of which are three steps of white marble.*

*(Enter youths of the choir swinging censers, followed by young girls dressed in white, scattering flowers.)*

Chorus. Love, thy great and potent sway  
All the sons of men obey ;  
On the sacred altar, see,  
Types of thy Eternity.

A Youth. Hail, renowned, youthful pair,  
Bless'd with every gift that's rare ;  
Be e'er yours on earth below  
All that Heav'n can bestow !

*A Girl.* Vernal youth will pass away,  
Beauty lingers for a day;  
Love alone shall live and last,  
When th' world itself is past.

*A Youth.* What is glory but a name?  
What so false as fleeting fame?  
But constant as the sun above  
Is faithful and immortal love.

*Chorus.* Love, thy great and perfect sway,  
All the race of men obey;  
On the sacred altar, see,  
Types of thy Eternity.

*(Scattering white roses, hyacinth, and jasmine, and swinging the censers, the youths and girls pass out. Enter HELOISE and MYRTILA. HELOISE is magnificently attired in a white robe, with a diadem of precious stones encircling her head. She looks melancholy and dejected.)*

*Heloise.* Let us tarry here awhile. The others  
Will shortly follow. Yet, 'ere they come,  
I have a boon to ask of thee, Myrtila.  
Wilt thou grant it?

*Myrtila.* Thou know'st that all thou ask'st of me  
Will be surely done, sweet Heloise.  
Would that I could see thee smile again  
As thou wert wont to do, ere Abelard,  
That false one, did steal away  
Thy heart from those that loved thee.

*Heloise.* Speak not thus ! Thou know'st not  
What slaves love makes of us, else thy lips  
Had been in silence hush'd upon the theme.  
List to me ! The fearful step which now  
I take in wedding Amadeus, is but to save  
My uncle Fulbert from the further shame—  
Alas ! I've wrought enough upon him—  
Of seeing me 'neath the Church's ban ;  
For the Holy Pontiff writes that wedlock's sanctity  
Alone my sin can 'solve. If I refuse,  
His excommunication follows.

*Myrtila.* Alas ! that shame should spring from  
love !

*Heloise.* Dear God, I love a man too well, and  
Thee not enough.

*Myrtila.* But this request of thine, what is't ?

*Heloise.* When the priest hath join'd the Prince  
and me,

The Holy Father will revoke his curse  
And change it to a blessing : 'tis then,  
To-night, that I shall fly my spouse's arms  
And swift embrace a rival's !

*Myrtila.* Heloise ! thou ravest !

*Heloise.* He has a rival, and his name is Death,  
And on his bony bosom would I lay  
My weary brow and sleep my sorrow all away.  
I, like a child, am weary of the play,  
With the colour'd bubble we call life.  
Since Abelard has gone I grope in darkness,

And to-night, when the Prince awaits his bride,  
This little friendly steel will ope the door  
To let me enter Death's great world of rest.

*(Takes a small poniard from her breast.)*

*Myrtila.* O horror !

*Heloise.* What horror lies in dreamless sleep ?  
A gentle, lasting sleep with all the senses still'd,  
The storm of passions calm'd, the mind's errors  
Allay'd, and the body's servitude quell'd for ever !  
Not what it is, but what cowards make of it,  
Transforms eternal sleep into a terror dark.

*Myrtila.* I cannot let thee die.

*Heloise.* What ! wouldst urge me on a  
wanton's life ?

To be a wife, when I have been  
The love of Abelard ! The thought revolts me !

*Myrtila.* How can I serve thee, poor wounded  
heart ?

*Heloise.* Nay, weep not, for thou too must go  
At thy allotted space. See that my cold form  
Is rob'd within that gown that Abelard  
Once lov'd to see me wear. 'Tis of velvet  
And of silk : the colours, white and rose :  
'Tis broider'd with seed pearls.

Then, lay his book of poems on my breast,  
So if, perchance, I should awake and see him not,  
I still may read his loving, tender thoughts,  
And dream I hear his silver voice again.



(*They withdraw with arms entwin'd. They have scarcely passed out, when ABELARD enters, with his eyes earnestly fixed on the book he is holding. PRINCE AMADEUS, who has just arrived, in a gorgeous habit, is so engrossed with the splendour of his own appearance, that he stumbles against ABELARD.*)

*Amadeus (angrily).* Look to thy goings, churlish priest !

Thy manners are most damnable.

*Abelard (haughtily).* Presume not, sir, too much upon this cassock,

For a man's heart beats beneath it.

(*Enter FULBERT, ANSELM, LOTULF, ALBERIC, PRIESTS and ATTENDANTS.*)

*Anselm (aside to LOTULF).* Abelard knows not 'tis Heloise he must wed unto the Prince.

*Lotulf.* Hast not o'erstepped the narrow line that

Prudence from foolhardiness doth separate ?

What will he say when he sees who 'tis ?

*Anselm.* He dare not utterance give unto his thoughts ;

The Church's sanctity forbids it.

*Lotulf.* Hope not too much from sanctity ;

Passion far nearer to the human heart  
Than Heav'n is.

*Abelard (taking the place near the altar, aside).*

Thoughts like fleeting clouds take shapes  
fantastic.

I fear—yet know not why I fear—to meet  
The would-be wedd'd pair.

*(Enter HELOISE and MYRTILA. HELOISE, who has come upon the scene with drooping eyes, suddenly perceives ABELARD as the officiating priest, and stands as if transfixed.)*

*Abelard.* Heloise !

*Heloise.* Abelard !

*Abelard.* Thou, then, art the bride !

*Heloise.* Thou, then, art the priest ! God save  
My tortur'd heart from bursting ere I speak ;  
A thousand letters I have writ to thee,  
And had not one response.

*Abelard.* I, too, have writ to thee unnumber'd  
times,  
And not one answer had.

*Heloise (despairingly).* See to what thy silence  
hath driven me !

*Abelard (bitterly).* I see well !  
Thou seek'st God's blessing on  
A newer and a richer lover.

*Heloise.* Cruel one ! be still. To-night had been  
My wedding and my death in one.

*Abelard.* Methought that thou hadst weary  
grown,

And car'd no more for me !

*Heloise.* Abelard ! 'tis thee alone I love !

*Abelard.* Break, my heart ! Thy words truth's  
impress bear,

Altho' thy deeds be strange. 'Tis too late !

I dare not utter now the thoughts that flow

Like torrent from my breast o'ercharged,

For Reason dams them back with floodgates stern :

Thus Art doth stay fond Nature.

*Heloise.* Drive me not away from thee :

I am thy Heloise unchang'd, and changeless ever.

Altho' the world may turn a Janus face to thee,

'Twill make me doubly constant, if that could  
e'er be.

*Abelard (in despair).* O God ! what time is this  
Thus to speak to me ?

*Heloise.* If thou wait'st for another, thou  
tarriest

Too long. Opportunities were but made for  
princes ;

I am near thee now, thus let me e'er abide.

Thou hast been the source of all my sorrow ;

Be thou the well-spring of my lasting joy,

And bid me stay with thee.

*Abelard.* Thy lov'd voice doth urge me to respond  
Against those vows that I to Heav'n have made.

Add not to my woe by thy sweet constancy ;

Bid me forget thy favours and that right  
Which they now claim from my too willing heart.  
Plead no more ! It is too late ;  
We are the sport of mocking fate.

*Anselm.* Unrighteous priest, recall  
Thy rebel heart unto thy pious obligations.  
Insult no more the Holy Church with the  
Avowals of thy vain love.

*Abelard.* Surely love partakes of all that's holy :  
The very Church is built on its foundation—  
Or, rather, should be—my noble, reverend lord.

*Amadeus.* I have withheld myself thus far,  
In pure respect for this most holy spot ;  
But, as I am a man of temper hot and passionate,  
I'll brook this saucy priest no more :  
My bride—I claim my bride !

*Heloise.* Thou claim'st a shadow,  
For I did ne'er mean to be thy wife  
As thou dost think it.

*Fulbert.* Insensate wretch, miscalled a woman !  
Where is thy softness and thy compliance ?  
Thy modesty ? thy sex's gracious virtues ?

*Abelard.* O that Philosophy  
Can teach what to itself it never can apply !  
Tempt me no more, Heloise, for I am sworn  
To Him who drieth hence all tears.

*Heloise.* How like a man ! Thou think'st but  
of thy grief,  
And not of me so hardly left to pine.

What shall I do—renounc'd by Abelard—  
But seek a speedier peace than Heav'n intend'd ?

*(Draws the dagger from her breast. ABELARD  
seizes it from her.)*

*Abelard.* Hold ! there is a refuge still, when  
Ev'ry other hope hath fled.  
Tho' affliction doth encompass thee  
Like threatening waves about a fragile barque,  
To whom the cruel world hath clos'd her ports,  
I still do know a harbour, O my Heloise,  
Merciful and safe, where storms do never reach,  
To harm thee with their passion.

*Heloise (with eyes full of hope).* And this  
Haven of hope, belov'd, show it me !

*Abelard (pointing to the great Cross that stands  
by the altar).* There is the refuge from all  
earthly ills,

Human woe and pain, and man's injustice ;  
'Tis the symbol of all evil, and its cure.  
Clasp it to thy breast ; 'twill uphold thee,  
And take away the sting of every anguish.  
There is the Cross, Heloise ; bear it bravely,  
And bravely it will bear thee. O thou dear one !  
Now too sensible to human love, go !  
Drive it from thy soul, and implant instead  
The higher love of thy salvation !

*(HELOISE, taking off her crown of jewels, casts it  
down, and going to the Cross, sinks at the  
foot of it weeping.)*

*Amadeus.* False priest ! thy wiles shall never  
steal my bride,  
Tho' they have robbed her senses ! Die !

*(Draws, and, as he would make a rush at ABELARD, PHILINTUS, who has been quietly watching all his movements, darts forward, and parrying the blow with his own weapon, stabs the PRINCE. The PRINCE falls.)*

*Fulbert.* Wretched woman ! see what fearful  
consequence  
Doth e'er attend an evil deed.  
What canst do now ?

*Heloise (clinging to the Cross).* My choice is  
here, since I have lost  
That thing in life by me most priz'd.

*Myrtilla (starting forward to HELOISE).* Speak  
but one word, one word to me,  
Thy sorrowing friend !

*Heloise.* Sweet, gentle woman's heart to kindly  
pity mov'd,  
Pray that never thou shouldst love as I have  
lov'd.

*(Enter ABBESS and NUNS in solemn procession. They kneel round the Cross, to which HELOISE clings with her face hidden. ABELARD takes a last look at the cause of his misfortune, and tears himself away.)*

## Act V





## ACT V

*(After fifteen years.)*

### SCENE I

*(The Convent Garden of the Paraclete.)*

*(HELOISE is seated at a rustic table reading. A young NUN is picking flowers, and the sound of female voices singing a hymn is softly borne upon the air.)*

*Heloise (putting down her book).* That tears  
could wash away the mem'ry  
Which lashes me with thongs of long-past  
joys,  
Kindling my still riotous blood into rebellion  
Against these cloister walls. O false piety!  
How real a vice there is 'neath seeming virtue,  
And how oft 'neath seeming vice is virtue  
hid!  
While my heart still beats for love of man,  
My tongue but teaches here the love of God.

In vain I light my matin lamp and many aves say ;  
Between my God and me terrestrial thoughts will  
stray.

When sensuous swelling organs tempt the sinner's  
heart

To raise his voice in pray'r with music's gentle  
art,

I murmur hollow words with wandering thoughts  
oppress'd,

For human love, not love Divine, rules within my  
breast.

*(The young NUN who has been gathering flowers  
approaches HELOISE with a bunch of blossom.)*

*Nun.* I fear I do disturb your pious thoughts ;  
Yet, since your generous heart, sweet mother,  
Does ever more forgive than much condemn,  
I ask your pardon if I rudely break  
Upon your blessed meditations.

*Heloise.* What wouldst thou, daughter ?

*Nun (timidly).* Will it please you, sweet mother,  
To give me leave to deck the altar, and that  
No other hand but mine should do 't ?  
Oh, chide me not for this ambitious sin !

*Heloise.* Thy wish is grant'd, daughter !  
Go ! thy task accomplish. None else  
Shall do the work. It is my order.

*(NUN makes a grateful obeisance and goes into the  
Convent.)*

*Heloise.* There are none so meek but have  
Their triumphs and ambitions.

(*Enter MYRTILA hastily, habited in the garb of a nun.*)

*Heloise.* Ah, Myrtila ! hast thou come to  
cheer me  
With thy discourse merry ? God forgive me !  
For ne'er do I behold thee but I feel  
A pang that thy bright spirit is entombed  
Within this gloomy place, instead of that  
Gay world without the Convent gates.

*Myrtila.* There was no world without my  
friend for me ;  
And when my friend I followed, I did  
Not leave the world ; or, if I did, I found  
A better one than it beyond the Convent walls.  
But I have news for thee.

*Heloise.* News ! Didst say that thou hast  
news for me ?  
What is it ? Hath the Convent tabby-cat  
Lapp'd up our cream or ate the fish ?  
Perchance the hens have suck'd up all their eggs ?  
If that be so—and surely it is Friday on the  
morrow—  
We shall but poorly fare.

*Myrtila (retrospectively).* To think that once  
we far'd so sumptuously !  
How mortals change !

*Heloise.* Thy news, my fair philosopher, if  
thou

Hast any ?

*Myrtila.* Dear friend ! I ne'er see thee but I  
think

That 'neath thy sombre garb thy tortur'd  
heart

Doth ev'r bleed in mem'ry of Abelard.

*Heloise.* Hush ! Breathe not that name !  
There are some griefs we dare not utter,  
Tho' they are ever upmost in our thought,  
Sapping our vitality, as the ivy which  
Like a vampire doth suck the strength  
From the body of the oak.

*Myrtila.* How couldst thou live and suffer thus !

*Heloise.* The tortur'd mind lasts longest.

(*Pauses*) But this news ?

*Myrtila.* A messenger did bring this letter

[*Gives HELOISE a letter.*

And the messenger was sent by Abelard.

I did delay to give it thee before,

For fear its very suddenness would hurt thee.

(*HELOISE seizes the letter, and opening it, reads in  
a voice trembling with emotion*) :--

"Abelard to Heloise, a well-beloved sister in  
Christ !

Rome's Holy Father hath enjoin'd

The Convent of the Paraclete I should visit,  
To enquire the method of your teaching,  
For which your name is justly famous.  
When you, renowned Abbess, have then me  
instructed,  
A full report thereon to Rome I will transmit  
For the world's enlightenment. The Holy Father  
Sends his blessing on your virtues.  
Unless untoward accident befalls,  
I should arrive at noon to-day. ABELARD."

*Heloise.* How colder than the snow that rests  
on Alpine heights

His words do press on me ! I had rather had  
One loving line from him,  
Than all the praise of Christendom.

*Myrtila.* Mayhap 'tis but a pretext feign'd  
So he again should see thee !

*Heloise.* O Friendship ! thou alone canst  
solace us  
When Love deserts !

*(Convent clock strikes twelve. NUNS, SISTERS,  
and SCHOLARS troop out of the Convent, and  
passing by HELOISE, respectfully salute her.  
Enter ABELARD, whom fifteen years have  
greatly altered, with PRIESTS and ATTEND-  
ANTS.)*

*Heloise (striving with difficulty to maintain a firm,  
dignified, but withal gentle demeanour).*

Most holy and renowned Father, you are welcome !  
Welcome to this place to which you yourself  
Have given fame, long ere you did give it me  
To govern. Pardon me this halting  
And disjoint'd speech. Greatly am I overcome  
With this unexpect'd honour !

*Abelard (in calm, measured, and deliberate tones,  
looking at her as though she were entirely  
strange to him, from under his drooping  
eyelids). Rever'd and gracious Abbess,  
Your gentle words*

Reproach me more than sharp reproof could do.  
This visit's suddenness, in truth, is worthy blame ;  
But let the number of my varied labours  
My excuses frame. The niceness of refined ways  
Are in active life, alas ! too soon forgot ;  
And labour, whilst it polishes our souls,  
Oft roughens our externals. Therefore, I pray  
you,

Pardon me for being thus abrupt !  
Faith's zeal, if not vain worldly form, must plead  
for me.

*Heloise (tremulously, but significantly). The  
presence of the famous Abelard is plea  
enough*

To exculpate far greater faults than this.

*Abelard (with courteous, but careless unconcern,  
inclining his head as if in thanks for the  
compliment). Thanks !*

Gentle Abbess, with you I would confer without  
delay

Upon the matter of my letter. Rome  
Fain would know the method of your teaching,  
To impart it thro' the world.

*Heloise (making a profound obeisance).* This  
mountain of honour heaped upon me  
Doth truly overwhelm my humble heart.

*(Aside)* His voice and manner turn my blood  
to ice ;

His praise doth make me hate the name of  
virtue,

His tones do make of it so harsh a thing.

*(To the NUNS, SISTERS, and SCHOLARS)* Go,  
daughters ! I would have private converse

With our illustrious visitor. I pray ye, show  
These gentlemen our far-fam'd Paraclete.

FIRST NUN *(whispering to another as she passes).*

Is that the renowned Abelard,  
Of whom 'tis said all ladies were enamour'd ?

Second Nun *(whispering).* How cold and stern  
he looks ! And inaccessible

To love and tenderness as the very rocks !

First Scholar. They say he once was young  
and debonair.

I'll not believe it !

Myrtila. Come, gentlemen, and let us to you  
show

The wonders of our convent home.

(*Exeunt* MYRTILA, NUNS, SISTERS, SCHOLARS,  
PRIESTS, *and* ATTENDANTS.)

*Heloise.* Hath grief so alter'd me, that thou  
look'st so,  
With calm, approving eyes bereft of love ?  
Hath Change's hand so drawn the face of Heloise,  
That thou regard'st it no more as the one  
Thou once didst swear was all the world to thee ?  
I'd rather have thee frown on me in anger,  
Than gaze with eye so still and so dispassionate.  
Perchance thy fame hath marr'd thy heart,  
And raising thee, hath lower'd me !

*Abelard (with proud humility).* Regard me not,  
I do beseech thee, as one  
In any way above my fellows. I am a sinner  
Prostrate before my Judge, and thy bitterness  
Doth ill accord with my deep humility.

*Heloise.* Thou didst never love me !  
Or, like all men, thy passion wan'd  
When I had nothing more to offer thee !  
O nature, human nature ! a shallow thing art  
thou !  
Ingratitude and cold neglect do bind thy wanton  
brow.  
A love unhallowed by the Church reaps this  
reward :  
To live desert'd and alone, or die a thing ab-  
horr'd.



*Abelard.* Through Satan's ways our Father  
leads us to His own.

Our former sin hath brought us here for good.

Th' illusion of life

Is short, but remorse is long. Curse me !

Curse me, Heloise, as a villain, and thy enemy,

For I did steal thine innocence from thee,

Which not Heav'n itself can e'er return.

I have pray'd and offer'd up my heart

T' appease the wrath to come, that I alone,

Not thou, shouldst suffer for our guilt.

*Heloise.* Thou hast no audience before thee  
now,

But only one sad, broken woman, who

Doth love thee still beyond all earth and heav'n.

Come ! speak not more to me in measured tones,

In which, as France's highest and noblest prelate,

Thou teach'st students wisdom and cause of all  
phenomena.

Frame thy words gently, Abelard, to me.

Remember why I enter'd here, and cast my youth

And pleasure all aside for thee. I was so young !

That for pity and for mem'ry now, feign a little  
love,

E'en if thou dost mean it not.

*Abelard.* Speak not thus to me, Heloise, speak  
not thus !

We are no longer of the earth. Wouldst thou

Destroy my piety in its infant state,

And strangle conscience' voice ? For penance  
We retir'd from the world ; let us not  
Recall those false joys past.

*Heloise (with scornful bitterness).* How easy 'tis  
for men those passions to condemn,  
When they in them no longer find delight.  
Narrow is that mind which Heav'n hopes to reach,  
By doing only that which dogmas cold ordain !

*Abelard.* Are the lives of dead saints " rules  
and dogmas ? "

And the constancy of martyrs but a name ?  
Come, then, if thou think'st it fit and meet,  
And in thy holy habit thrust thyself between  
My God and me ! Come ! be thou a wall  
Of separation from salvation, and my sacred  
peace.

And yet, I would entreat thee, by all fondness past,  
To suffer me to shun destruction, and to lead  
Thee too from the yawning maw of Hell.

*Heloise.* There never did man reason yet,  
But it did blast the sentiment of woman.  
Thou hast made great strides to Heav'n's attain-  
ment !

But my devotion's earthly, and is fix'd upon a  
man.

Hast thou forgot those shining days,  
When all the world had no such joy  
As our two hearts did hold ? I needs must weep  
When now I think on 't. Delightful dream !

Tender vision of man's constancy, too soon  
Dispell'd by time. Thou wert my dream,  
My dream come true : my world, my light,  
My nobler, better, higher self.  
Darkness spread her wings where thou wert not,  
And sunlight stream'd where'er thou trod'st,  
Though night had fallen ! Thou wert my peace,  
My soul's tranquillity ; and sorrow stood aside  
Nor dar'd approach, when thou wert near,  
Nor joy had one delight when thou wert far.

*Abelard (in hurried and repressed accents).* Thy  
tears have washed the secrets of my soul,  
That I had thought to take unto the grave.  
Priestly vows have stemm'd my passion ; but  
My thoughts in solitude are filled with dreams  
of thee.

I search'd for an asylum far from love,  
But the stillness as of death did minister  
To summon up the heaven of our past.  
I love thee ! Shame presses me on ev'ry side—  
I should remember I am a priest—  
But alas ! the love of God and piety do not  
Annihilate the love for woman ! Ye cloisters !  
Your murky shadows hide, but do not quench  
The pangs of human passion and their attendant  
tortures !

Why are the chalices of saints so harsh and bitter,  
And the sinner's cup so sweet ? Easy 'twere  
To tread the path of virtue, were it fair !

*Heloise (in a voice of unutterable delight, going to ABELARD to embrace him). Thou lov'st me yet !*

*Abelard (moving away from her). To love thee truly is to leave thee !*

I dare not even stay fulfil the Pope's behest ;  
I cannot trust myself.

*(Enter PRIESTS, NUNS, SISTERS, SCHOLARS, and ATTENDANTS, and MYRTILA.)*

*Abelard. Farewell, most wise and reverend Abbess !*

In your pray'rs forget not mine iniquities,  
My wretchedness, my sorrows, and my penitence.  
Farewell ! Farewell !

*[Exeunt ABELARD, PRIESTS, and ATTENDANTS.]*

*Myrtila (to HELOISE). Thou look'st so strange, and like to swoon !*

O God ! what ails thee ?

*Heloise (faintly, and as though her mind is waning). 'Tis the old, old pain—my trouble o' the heart.*

The disease is Abelard, and knows no cure ;  
He's gone, and with him goes my life !

*(Pauses, and, in her distraction, believes she sees ABELARD before her.)*

But stay, he is not gone, for I behold  
His eyes transparent, thro' which the world

Could view a great and noble tortur'd soul—  
Tortured by earth's injustice—bend upon me  
Their matchless light and proud intelligence.  
His air divine, mysterious, and strange,  
Doth mark him as a god 'midst men of clay !  
Dear image of great Abelard !  
Oh ! merit and celebrity ! Oh ! wonder of the age !  
Despite the calumnies of thine enemies.  
But mark, Myrtila ! Ne'er scorn a foe,  
Howev'r base he be ; for little spites  
Can work great ills—at least, so I have proved.  
Hold me in thy arms, unworthy as I am,  
And press thy lips to mine with kisses  
Such as angels do exchange in Paradise.  
How bright the world is thro' love's glasses !  
Give me thy hand ! Inconstant ! Dost say,  
Nay !  
Then, prythee, go before !—to Heav'n lead the  
way !

*(She fancies ABELARD is leading, and tries to  
follow him, but, overcome by the mental strain,  
she falls lifeless into MYRTILA'S arms.)*

*Myrtila (calling).* Help ! Help ! Help !  
Our abbess is dying !

## SCENE 2

*The Abbey of St Cluni.*

*(Enter PHILINTUS as monk.)*

*Philintus.* I have known places more holy than  
a monastery,  
Where the scenes of busy life were wildest ;  
And I have seen a layman lead  
A better life than many a monk.  
A priestly garb no more creates a godly mind  
Than kingly robes do make a righteous man.  
Tho', God's patience ! courtiers would have us  
Believe this miracle !

*(Enter ABELARD.)*

*Abelard.* What news, Philintus ?

*Philintus.* When thou didst go unto the  
Paraclete,  
I was called to shrive a woman.  
'Twas Agaton. Dost thou remember the pretty  
maid  
That waited once on Heloise ?

*Abelard.* Her waiting-woman ! As in a dream  
I do remember her. Well ! well !

*Philintus.* She was changed, as all of us  
Whom Autumn's sere has overtaken.

In weeping tones she did confess to me  
A sin that all her soul perturb'd  
With wild unrest. Then her poor, parch'd  
lips

Did murmur forth the story of her guilt,  
Which sore afflicted me. Dost thou recall  
The countless letters thou didst write to Heloise,  
And which to Agaton I did deliver ?

*Abelard (impatiently).* Well ! well !

*Philintus.* With threats and vile endeavours  
too successful,

Did Anselm, false and perjured Anselm, worm  
Them from the maid, who fear'd her soul's  
damnation.

So never one of all thy words reach'd Heloise,  
And ne'er a note of Heloise reach'd thee ;  
But all were giv'n to this villain, who compos'd  
Of all those notes harmonious a most profound  
discord !

*Abelard.* Chill time has cool'd my once hot  
blood ;

Tempestuous rage requires all youth's vigour  
To sustain it. O cruel, fiendish villain !  
To blight two loving hearts without a cause !  
I dare not think too much on 't, for fear  
My days be spent in vain regret, not work.  
O Justice ! thy bandaged eyes are blind indeed,  
Thy sword with rust corrodes, or never  
Turpitude like this unpunished had been !

*Philintus.* This earth were not earth at all if  
wickedness  
Thriv'd not more than honesty. Fulbert is dead ;  
Anselm is rais'd  
To be Archbishop in his stead.

*Abelard (musing).* Canst tell me, Philintus,  
why the good are taken  
And the wicked left behind ?

*Philintus.* The good are taken from the trouble  
yet to come ;  
The wicked stay that more may be their  
share.

*Abelard.* My friend ! many strange events by  
chance occur,  
That, strive we how we may, never hap  
By work alone.

(*Enter a MONK hastily.*)

*Monk.* Hold yourself in readiness, I pray !  
His Majesty the King himself doth honour you  
By coming here.

*Abelard.* The strumpet Fame, like Aphrodite  
of Paphos,  
Tho' she be Corruption's self, kings do worship  
her.  
An evil-doer patt'd on the back by Fortune  
Is the welcome guest of monarchs, whilst  
Modest merit pines thro' cold neglect.



Go, Philintus ! see to my duties i' the chapel,  
Whilst I a king receive !

[*Exit* PHILINTUS.]

(*Fanfare. Enter* KING OF FRANCE, ANSELM,  
now ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS, ATTENDANTS,  
COURTIERS, PAGES, PRIESTS, *etc.*)

*King of France.* 'Tis a monarch's privilege  
and glory

To seek those sons of fame who lend  
Honour to their country. Renowned Abelard,  
Hither have we come to tender thee our thanks  
For thy learning's services to France.

*Abelard (with an obeisance and covert sarcasm).*

Happy is that country whose king  
Looks to his people's welfare ! Whom justice,  
And not party spirit, sways ; whose mind  
Doth scorn the fickle tongue of flatterers and  
rises

Eagle-like to heav'n for the truth of things,  
Which he ne'er can hear from courtiers.  
From such a king judges will take pattern  
And mould their canker'd hearts to his,  
So ne'er wrongful or unjust sentence be  
Passed upon the innocent.

*K. of France.* Fain would we reward thee<sup>33</sup> for  
thy work ;  
Therefore, learned Abelard, we charge thee  
To speak, and tell us thy desire.

*Abelard.* My desire is every man's, my liege ;  
I ask for justice. 'Tis all, and yet therein  
I feel I ask for more than is on earth.

*K. of France.* Think'st thou there is no justice ?

*Abelard.* It doth exist—in dreams !

*K. of France.* Thou speak'st as one embitter'd.

*Abelard.* When Fate pour'd out my cup of  
life, my liege,

She did forget to sweeten it. Or, mayhap,  
She poured my share into another's,  
Who now two portions hath.

*K. of France.* Give words to thy complaint.

*Abelard.* Let me recall into your thoughts, my  
liege,

A story of the Holy Writ the prophet Nathan  
Did tell unto King David, and 'tis this.  
Once there liv'd two men—one rich, one poor ;  
The rich man had exceeding flocks and herds,  
The poor man but one ewe lamb.  
A puny thing it was, but greatly cherish'd,  
As they who little have alone can love.  
But lo ! there came a traveller one day,  
And the rich man took not of his flock,  
But slew the poor man's one ewe lamb,  
And left him desolate.

*K. of France.* I answer as King David did :  
He who did this thing shall die !  
Thou speak'st in parables ; unfold thyself !  
Who is he that wrong'd thee ?

*Abelard (pointing to ANSELM, who in the parable has recognised himself as the rich man, and shrinks before the accusing eye and voice of ABELARD). There stands the whited sepulchre :*

So mild to outward view, so full of hate within !  
Full fifteen years gone by, by methods devilish  
He me part'd from my love.

*K. of France.* Alas ! I do remember well that  
sad and woeful tale

Of two who lov'd so true and tenderly.

Did Anselm work this cruel thing ?

*(To ANSELM)* My Lord Archbishop, answer to this  
charge !

*Abelard.* What matter his words when guilt  
Is writ upon his mien and countenance ?

*K. of France (to ANSELM).* What the King  
hath giv'n, the King can take away.

We shrive thee of all honours, tho' the pain  
Of just remorse belongs to Higher Hands ;  
'Tis the lightning power beyond the commands  
Of earthly potentates.

*Anselm.* O woe ! Guilt's punishment is  
doubled

When it falleth on old age. Misfortune's mael-  
strom

Sucks us down, and vigour being gone,  
We have no pow'r left wherewith to wrestle !

[*Exit.*

*K. of France.* Art thou satisfied now ?

*Abelard.* Can sated vengeance sorrow heal ?  
Or present smiling fortune hide the scars  
Of suffering past ?

*K. of France.* Nor Heav'n's King himself can  
make  
That which has been ne'er to have happ'd.  
Take heart of grace, great Abelard ; the highest  
honours  
Are in store for thee.

*Abelard.* Honours that are thrust on age  
Come too late, my liege. What is a marble  
tomb

To the dead heart beneath that crav'd  
In life sweet human love and fame ?

*K. of France (excusatively).* So much thou hast  
assailed been,  
That all thy bright ability avail'd not  
In the balance 'gainst thy defects reputed.  
Tardy recognition is better sure than none.

*Abelard.* Kings are nurtur'd in an air of falsity,  
Like hot-house plants that know not heav'n's  
breath.

Yet, being kings, their royalty should clear  
The atmosphere corrupt that doth surround them.  
'Tis not enough to be a king : a king should be  
a man ;

Not heed such idle lying tales that sycophants  
Do bring him.

*K. of France.* Dar'st criticise a king ?

*Abelard (with affected humility).* Nay ; I criticise but that which men make of him.

Many there are that do think a crown  
Brings every virtue with it. Yet Wisdom,  
Temperance, Mercy, Stability, and Truth  
Are not vain baubles which monarchs can  
Acquire as they do the diadem and robes of  
state.

The graces of the heart need years of practice  
To perfect them, my liege. So it be e'er said,  
The head the crown becomes, not the crown the  
head.

*K. of France.* Monks are shorn of manners as  
they  
Are of hair.

*Abelard.* In courts, men's honesty from their  
souls  
Is shorn, my liege.

*K. of France.* Mannerless priest ! one word of  
mine  
Could level thee with the dust !

*Abelard.* There is another King 'fore whom all  
men  
Are equal. One word of His, my liege,  
And you and earth would chaos be.  
Lesser fears are e'er by the greater swallow'd ;  
Therefore, with greater fear upon me,  
How can I dread the wrath of temporal power ?

*K. of France.* Thy priest's robe saves thee  
from mine anger !

Farewell, proud man ! we shall not meet again.

*(Exit, followed by ATTENDANTS, PRIESTS, COURT-  
TIERS, etc.)*

*Abelard (alone).* Will a king's robe save him  
from retribution

For his many deeds of cruelty and wrong ?

O Guilt ! thou art more damning in proportion

To the offender's rank !

*(Enter PHILINTUS.)*

*Abelard.* What tidings, Philintus ?

*Philintus.* Alas ! they are grievous.

*Abelard.* All tidings are ill to me of late.

But what is this new one ? Methought

That sorrow had no shaft that she

Had not against me sped.

*Philintus (aside).* Unhappy messenger that  
I am !

More hapless than the story to be told !

*(Aloud)* Dear Abelard ! one of the renown'd  
lights

Of our Church is dead—extinguished !

*Abelard.* Let masses be said for the soul  
depart'd.

See to 't at once ! But stay, who was't ?

*Philintus* (with emotion he endeavours to suppress). An abbess.

*Abelard* (meditatingly). Did she come within my jurisdiction ?

Death is a cold journey we all must take.

*Philintus* (aside). Will he apply that chill philosophy

To his own affliction ?

(Aloud) Thou didst know her, Abelard. She was thy star

For good and evil in this life—thy Heloise !

*Abelard* (after a pause, in which he appears stunned with horror and astonishment. He speaks in a voice of intense emotion). Dead, say'st thou ? Then say no masses for her,

But let us pray to her that she should pray for us.

She, the fairest angel of them all in heav'n.

Dead, say'st thou ? But no, I'll not believe thee ;

'Tis a trick to lure me to her. Come ! say 'twas

A falsehood told for love, and I'll forgive thee ;

Ay, love thee more for telling it, *Philintus*.

Death dare not claim the good and beautiful,

And leave the old and wicked still to live.

The grisly shape would fear to touch her,

So much was she of glowing life the image.

*Philintus*. Alas ! would that I had died instead !

*Abelard.* My friend ! she is not dead. The  
stars that shoot  
Athwart the firmament but change their places ;  
So she hath places changed, but liveth still  
Where we with human eyes can never follow.

*Philintus.* Take what comfort that thou canst  
of grief ;  
Nature's sweet relief it is to sorrow for the dead.

*Abelard.* Of what disease died she ?

*Philintus.* 'Twas said of a broken heart.

*Abelard.* But when my eyes did last behold her,  
She seemed well.

*Philintus.* The Master of all good hath said  
Appearances lie more than words.

*Abelard.* I kill'd her by my harshness,  
And mask'd the blow in duty's name  
To make it less severe.

*Philintus.* Reproach not thyself ; 'twas fated  
thus,  
And mortal hand had naught to do with it.  
Yet, 'tis passing strange she liv'd so long  
Without thee, and, when thou cam'st, to die.

*Abelard.* Prosperity destroys thousands, but  
adversity  
Tens of thousands. Her life hung upon  
A hope, the hope to be with me once more.  
Alas, that I should say it ! And when I cut,  
Like Atropos, the slender thread that held her,  
She fled from earth.



*Philintus.* Life's a battle ! She is at peace.  
Be thankful that her wars are o'er.  
The messenger who brought these tidings did  
avow

That at the Paraclete confusion reigns supreme,  
Like a braid'd hive when the queen bee's flown !

*Abelard.* Go thou unto the Convent and arrange  
All fitting obsequies for my belov'd.

Spare not state, and say I'll come anon.  
Bid them clothe her form in vestments sacred,  
Which yet will be more holy by the contact  
With her person noble. Let white-stol'd priests  
Prolonged masses 'cite beside her relics cold,  
Since it is the custom ; her spirit  
Needs no such help. What slaves are we to habit,  
That, when an angel lives and dies amongst us,  
We needs must pray for her, as tho' her life  
Was not a supplication far more worth  
Than empty words of deedless hypocrites.

*Philintus.* I will look to the mournful rites,  
As thou thyself wouldst do. [Exit.

*Abelard (alone).* Come, Death ! twin-brother of  
unlighten'd Sorrow,  
And be my night of rest ! Hold forth thine icy  
hand,  
And clasp my living one in thine, and I will bless  
thee !

Come, sit beside me, and I will welcome thee  
As never man has welcomed friend ! Be my guest,

And I will entertain thee like a king, altho' thy  
retinue

Be endless, mute, and terrible ! Then, king-like,  
thou

Must ask me back unto thy land, and I will  
prove

Thy loyal subject, not to leave thee ever.

O God ! that what we pray for most should be  
Grant'd in the least degree ! When she liv'd,

Duty did come first ; now, she's gone,

Love's recollection bows my spirit to the earth,  
And duty seems but mockery.

*(As ABELARD soliloquises, he gradually and almost imperceptibly changes from the cold-hearted ascetic priest to the wild dreamer.)*

How strange it is that, ere we leave the world,  
There comes a time when youth's sweet vernal  
days

Flow back upon the mem'ry, like a tide

Upon the strand, which age and grief have  
parch'd !

Each trivial act and thought is magnified, and  
assumes

Aspect so portentous, that things of moment

Oft are lost within them ! I recollect Heloise

Did love to see me clad in gallant garb,

Not cloth'd in this dull habit. But why recall

This pretty whim ? What greater grief is there

Than thoughts of pleasure past when misery is  
near ?

O hell ! thou hast no torture like to mem'ry !

\* \* \* \* \*

There's something in the air. 'Tis passing warm ;  
I'll ope the casement, and let the wind blow in.

*(ABELARD opens the casement, and the place,  
hitherto dark, is suddenly overspread by a  
flood of moonlight. He appears to change  
still more, as he passionately apostrophises  
the dead HELOISE in words of mingled grief  
and sadness. His old-time self—the ardour  
of his youthful love—seems to rejuvenate  
him.)*

Where, O my belov'd, do now thy footsteps fall ?  
Canst, from where thou art, hear my plaintive  
call ?

Oh ! for one brief hour to have thee back once  
more,

To learn that there is meeting when mortal life  
is o'er !

Now Fancy—cruel spirit !—doth the passions  
rouse,

Calling voiceless phantoms from her charnel-house.  
They wear bright living colours, hapless man to  
show

Life's elusive joys—and the reality of woe.

Hear, O my belov'd! each chalic'd flow'r dear  
 Lowly hangs her head and drops a dewy tear.  
 The song-birds silent brood, the hills are grey  
                   and stern,  
 Since Heloise has gone, and never must return.  
 Nature rules by changes. The seasons come and  
                   go :

Summer deck'd in flowers, Winter wrapp'd in  
                   snow.

'Midst the world's mutation I am changeless now,  
 Since sorrow hath with wither'd leaves endiadem'd  
                   my brow.

*(In the flood of the moonlight the shade of HELOISE  
                   is seen slowly to disclose itself.)*

Heloise! thou who wert the sunshine of my life,  
 Which without thee is like night,  
 Take me hence with thee!

\*           \*           \*           \*           \*           \*

Hear me! Hear me!

Heloise, my belov'd! O take me hence!  
 And in that space of blue infinitude  
 Let us together be! Or let us sleep  
 Deep and dreamless in the breast of earth;  
 I care not which—so that I am with thee.  
 I tortured thee in life, and now in death  
 Thou rackest me with fond remembrance  
 Of sacrificéd love! Take me hence!  
 'Twas for thee alone I sought renown!

When men applaud'd, I did think of thee  
 And how my fame would please thee.  
 Like the sun, thou shon'st on me from far,  
 Knowing not that thou didst generate  
 My better self unto a noble ferment  
 'Gainst injustice and the thousand persecutions  
 Which e'er beset new thought.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Christ, sweet Christ is merciful !  
 None did yet appeal to Him in vain.  
 He doth grant the contrite heart its peace,  
 When bruis'd and wound'd in life's battle.

*(The shade of HELOISE stretches her arms towards  
 ABELARD.)*

I may come then, and shall not be divid'd  
 more !  
 Where now is thy sting, O Death ? Where, Grave,  
 Thy victory ?

*(As the entranced and deranged ABELARD moves  
 towards the shade of HELOISE, the moon is  
 suddenly obscured by a sombre cloud and  
 wraps the scene in darkness. Presently the  
 place becomes light again, this time from the  
 torches of MONKS who enter, preceded by PHIL-  
 INTUS. With an ejaculation of horror and  
 despair, the latter beholds the lifeless form of  
 ABELARD on the ground, and sinks beside it*

*in an agony of grief. The MONKS kneel reverently and pray for the departed soul of their chief. As they do so, the peals of the organ and the voices of the choir are heard at their orisons, chanting) :—*

“ ’Gainst earthly passions, Jesu, pray,  
Deliver us by night and day;  
Unlink those fearful chains that hold  
Men to lust and thirst of gold.  
Miserere Domine ! ”

THE END



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